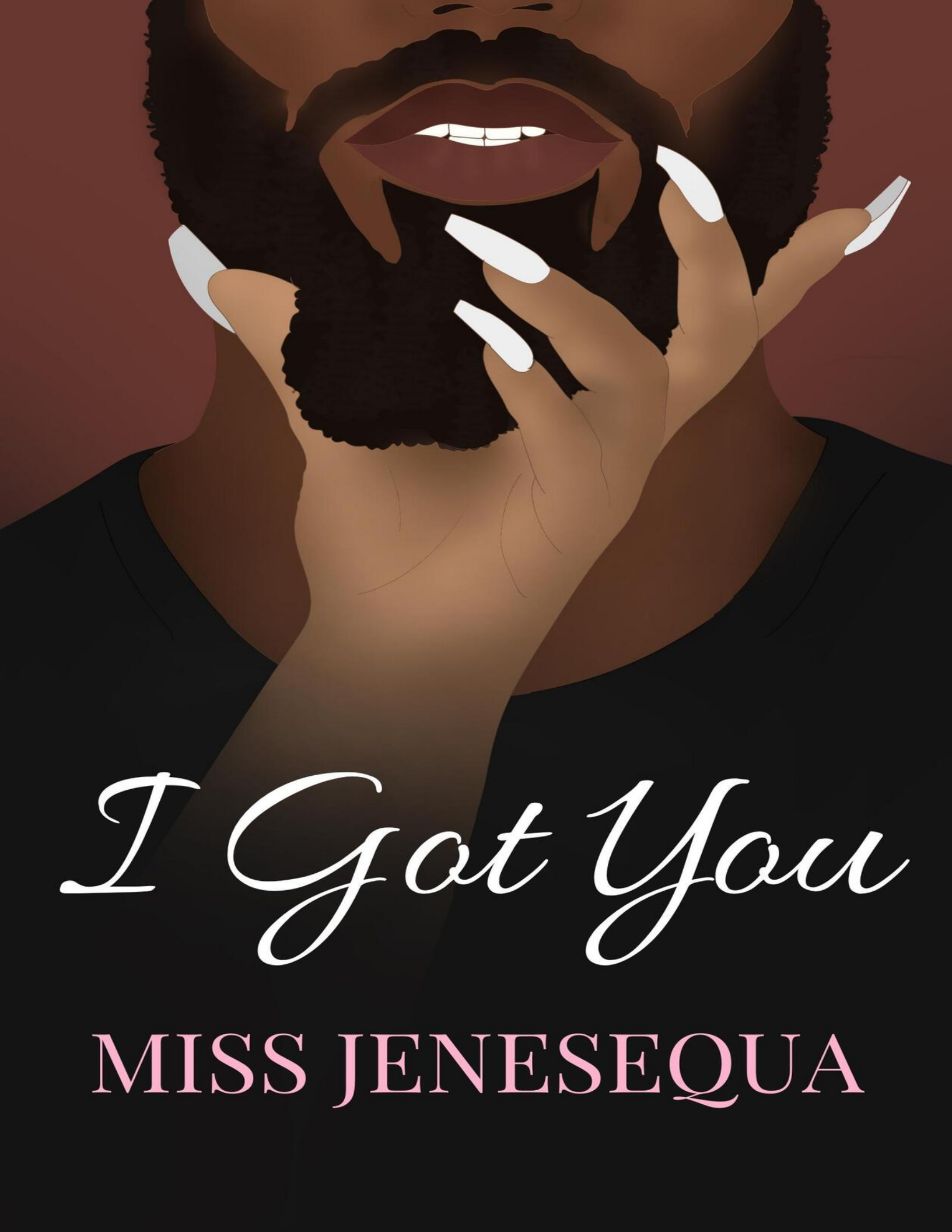

I Got You

MISS JENESEQUA

i got you

miss jenesequa

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Contains explicit content & language suitable for mature audiences only.

Potentially triggering subject matter:
This novel makes reference to depression, suicide, and domestic violence but they are only mentioned briefly and are **not** described in explicit detail.

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A Note From Miss Jen:
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by miss jenesequa

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Down For My Baller: A Complete Novel

Bad For My Thug 1 & 2 & 3

The Thug & The Kingpin's Daughter 1 & 2

Loving My Miami Boss 1 & 2 & 3

Giving All My Love To A Brooklyn Street King 1 & 2

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Bad For My Gangsta: A Complete Novel

The Purest Love for The Coldest Thug 1 & 2 & 3

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My Hood King Gave Me A Love Like No Other 1 & 2 & 3

My Bad Boy Gave Me A Love Like No Other: A Complete Novella

The Thug That Secured Her Heart 1 & 2 & 3

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You're Mine: Chosen By A Miami King: A Complete Novel

A Love That Melted A Capo's Cold Heart: A Complete Novel

Real Love From A Real One 1 & 2

Thyri's Theories: A Collection Of Short Poems

I Got You: A Complete Novel

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synopsis

“I got her and everything that comes with her. All the good, bad, and crazy, I’ll be taking. Anything she needs, consider it hers and with her in my life, I’ll forever be whole.” — **Genesis Washington**

Putting herself first is what Jordana Evans knows how to do best. She’s at the top of her game in her career and no longer haunted by memories of her past threatening to steal her joy. In her mind, being in love is a want, not a need and she’s convinced that she’ll be just fine without it. Having intimate relations with the opposite sex is something she’s willing to do for one night only. But then came along… *him* .

Being the son of a hood legend means absolutely nothing to Genesis Washington. His only priorities are taking care of the two people who have his heart – his sister and his nephew – and running the multimillion dollar company that keeps his pockets fat. Juggling love and business just never made sense to a man like him so he chose the latter. But crossing paths with Jordana Evans suddenly changes everything for him and she becomes the only woman he wants. And he isn’t the type of man who shies away from whatever he desires.

When Jordana and Genesis lay eyes on each other, they’re unable to fight off the feelings that form from their very first encounter. What starts off as a onetime thing quickly turns into an addiction neither of them can get enough of, but the pain of Jordana’s past has her determined to keep their new arrangement strictly between the sheets. Can Genesis truly be the one to ease Jordana’s heavily guarded heart or will family do more damage to Genesis and Jordana before they fully have the chance to prosper?

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1
jordana

THE NUMBER one thing I have always admired about my city was its real estate. Some of the most gorgeous homes graced Houston and I would never get tired of dreaming about owning my piece of property one day. But for now, I would continue to admire breathtaking houses like the one I'd just pulled up to now.

I'd had no idea that Gabrielle had moved. We weren't best friends so it's not like she had to involve me in her personal decisions but she was one of my favorite clients. Talking to her was always such a breath of fresh air and how could I forget how well she tipped? But when it came to Gabrielle, I wasn't doing her hair for the money. I was doing it because I genuinely wanted to see her smile.

Man… that smile of hers could light up a whole damn room and I felt blessed whenever she smiled around me. I was big on energies and something about her energy just pulled me in close and made me never want to let her go.

It'd been a minute since I'd touched Gabrielle's hair and my other favorite client, her son, Kaiser. I'd only done his hair once just under two months ago and the same way I loved doing Gabrielle's hair was the same way I loved doing his. He was only three but he'd grown a full head of hair (it'd happened overnight according to Gabrielle) and since Gabrielle was one of those unicorn type of black women who couldn't braid hair to save her life, she requested my services.

I didn't actually do braid hair styles for a living. Though I knew how to braid well, my specialties were hairstyles such as tape ins and sew ins. Tape ins were what I did on Gabrielle and while I'd been doing her hair, she'd

mentioned how she had a son whose hair needed braiding. For Gabrielle and her son, I was willing to carry out a braiding job that I hadn't done in years.

Me doing Kaiser's hair was how I'd stepped into Gabrielle's townhouse for the very first time. She usually came to the salon I worked at, but because of how busy it got with women, I was more than willing to do a house call for Kaiser. He'd be welcomed in the salon because of how adorable he was but I wanted him and Gabrielle comfortable. A house visit was the best of both worlds because I could do his hair in the comfort of his home and still provide him with a great service.

I was already doing house calls for a few of the Instagram influencers I did the hair of. They liked being lowkey and didn't mind paying me extra for the privacy that a house call came with.

Kaiser had been a sweetheart the entire time I did his mini box braids. All I had to do was keep him entertained with a pack of fruit snacks, a juice box and my iPad and it was like I wasn't even there. His box braids had turned out super cute and he couldn't stop smiling whenever his mom gassed him up on how handsome he looked.

I expected to hear back soon from Gabrielle about me coming down to do Kaiser's hair again, but when a month passed and I heard nothing from her I thought maybe she was good on me coming back again. I hadn't even done her hair in a minute so I wasn't sure she wanted my services anymore. However, a few days ago I received a new DM from her, pleading with me to fit Kaiser in for a redo of his braids ASAP. Any day or time worked for her. She was even willing to pay extra for any inconvenience she was causing by trying to get a last minute appointment. I told her not to be silly and that I'd be at her house on Wednesday at six-thirty p.m. Then she told me that she was staying at a new location before sending me the address and that was where I'd arrived at now.

It was a two-story home surrounded by oak trees with a brick exterior, a freshly mown front lawn and a long brick pathway that led to two large black doors.

After parking in the circular driveway, I grabbed my large Telfar bag in the passenger seat next to me and stepped out my Jeep. I walked up to the black doors and pressed the doorbell once I stood in front of them.

It took a couple seconds for me to hear footsteps approaching but when they came I held my head high and felt the corners of my mouth lift at the

fact that I was about to see the two clients I'd missed dearly.

One door was cracked open and just when I expected to see Gabrielle, my expectations were dismissed when I locked eyes on a face that brought a flush to my cheeks.

He was tall… the kind of tall that made me feel like a tiny ant which was new for me because I was five ten. And those eyes… God, those eyes were *dangerous* . Dangerous because I didn't want to stop looking at them. They were so dark brown that they looked black and yet looking into them made me feel a refuge like no other. Those eyes pulled me in deep, making everything around me become a meaningless backdrop. All I could see was him and I was convinced that I'd been transported to a whole new world. All I was missing was the magic carpet that I could fly around on, allowing me to become his Jasmine while he became my Aladdin.

"You're late," his deep voice sounded and I was taken aback by the firmness in his tone.

My brows knitted as I lifted my left wrist and glanced down at the mini screen that brightened at the movement of my wrist.

It was 6:32 p.m.

I almost wanted to laugh out loud but I chose not to and just as I lifted my eyes back on his, I noticed the smirk now dancing on his heart shaped lips.

"Well, if you hadn't taken your sweet time getting to the door I would've been inside right on time," I announced.

He released a light chuckle that sent vibrations across my skin. Because of how deep his voice was, it sounded like a mini groan to me and I wasn't able to stop the tingle that traveled down to the passage between my thighs.

"Nice try but it didn't take me long to answer the door. You're still two minutes lat—"

"Jordyyyyy!" an excited yell cut him off and I looked down to see tiny hands land on his long-cloaked leg.

The tiny hands pushed him and I'm sure they weren't doing any real damage to actually move him, but Mr. Dangerous Eyes surely acted like they were and cleared out the way for my favorite client to make his debut appearance.

"Damn, lil' man, you really just gon' push your unc to the side like I ain't no one special, huh?"

“Jordyyyyy!” Kaiser exclaimed as he ran into me and grabbed hold of my legs.

“Awww, there’s my favorite person in the whole wide world,” I said, giggling as I crouched down to embrace him.

“Missed you,” he told me while we hugged and that was enough to make my heart fill with joy.

We’d only met once but our first day together had been everything. He loved my company while I did his hair and honestly I loved his just as much.

“So, I guess we all know who you’re moving in with tonight, Kai. You don’t need my ass anymore since you’ve got a new best friend.”

My gaze lifted and I couldn’t help but flash a taunting smile up at the man I now knew to be Kaiser’s uncle. Since I was crouched down, he was able to tower over me much more than before and I took this moment to take a closer look at him.

His walnut brown skin tone looked smooth as silk, those juicy lips that were lined by a mustache, looked soft as butter and that neatly shaped beard looked like the only thing I needed to feel against my skin every night to sleep peacefully. He had low cut hair with a taper fade on each side of his head. Dark clothing cloaked his long body. A black turtleneck, black sweats, and black Gucci slides. The only light color I could make out against his walnut brown skin was the silver necklace hanging around his neck that had a cross pendant. I found it ironic that someone like him wore a cross when he looked like the type of man to make a woman want to sin every day for the rest of her life just to get a taste of him.

He was the dark knight that had come to torment my dreams because I was sure that after laying eyes on him today, I would never be able to stop seeing his face while I slept at night. It wouldn’t matter how hard I tried to push him out, he would reign supreme and torment me for many nights to come.

God had taken His time making this one and He’d wasted not a single ounce of sexy. I was sure He’d made this man extra fine just to be able to look down from heaven above at His masterpiece. He’d made this man extra fine, knowing that I’d be one of those women that wouldn’t resist looking.

Why’d you have to be so extra, Lord? You know I have eyes and I’m obviously going to notice a man like him.

Kaiser pulled out of my arms and asked in that cute little toddler voice of his, “You do my hair now?”

I nodded, running a hand through his curly mane. Gabrielle had already told me how she’d washed and blow dried Kaiser’s hair.

“Look at all this pretty hair. It’s gotten so much longer,” I commented, letting my fingers dance with his curls.

Kaiser had 4B type hair. His tight curls were fluffy as cotton candy and I loved running my fingers through them. At only three years old he was blessed with long, healthy hair and I was grateful his mother trusted me enough to style it.

“About time you showed up. Gabi really had my boy out here looking rough.”

“Hey!” Kaiser turned to look up at his uncle and started shaking a finger at him, which brought an amused look to both his uncle’s face and mine. “Mommy said to stop calling me rough. I handsome!”

“You sure are, my love.” I giggled, standing up and stepping into the front foyer.

I’d already caught a whiff of something fragrant when the door had opened but now that I'd entered, I could smell the subtle yet pleasing aroma of cedar and lavender.

“Your momma ain’t the boss of me, kid. If I say you look rough then you look rough. Don’t think cause you got a pretty woman gassing you up that it ain’t true.”

“No, it’s not! I handsome!”

Kaiser ran toward his uncle’s tall frame and started trying to fight him. Of course, his small strength and size was no match for his uncle but his uncle played along to the little game he’d begun and they were now playfighting. Kaiser’s laughter filled the space as his uncle lifted him upside down and tickled him nonstop.

It was cute watching them interact but I found myself distracted by what I’d been called just seconds ago.

Pretty woman.

However, I refused to let the comment gas me up and I took this brief moment to look around. I was only in the front foyer but still I could see the elegant design of this home. To the right of me was a mounted abstract painting that looked like it cost a pretty penny, up ahead was an open doorway that led to the dining room and to the left of me was a curved

staircase that led upstairs. Staring at it made me wonder where Gabrielle was at and if she knew I was here.

“Gabrielle’s currently getting some rest,” *his* baritone that I was sure had to be laced with honey interrupted my thoughts and my eyes quickly met his. “She knows you’re here though and told me to tell you she appreciates you hooking up Kai at the last minute.”

I don’t know what kind of telepathic sorcery he’d managed to conjure up by answering the questions forming in my mind without me asking him yet, but I needed him to stop. I didn’t need or want him knowing my private thoughts.

I nodded but decided not to say a word and I let my eyes drift away from his.

“Kai, why don’t you show your new best friend where she’ll be doing your hair?”

Kaiser had been placed back down on his feet and was now making his way toward me. I quickly kicked off my Nike sneakers and placed them by the wall.

“Come on, Jordy.” He grabbed my hand and led me into the room to the right hand side of where we were.

We entered the living room and its decor was truly one of a kind. It had oak flooring, white walls that a few artistic paintings hung on, multiple floor to ceiling windows that gave an amazing view of the backyard, a fireplace and TV built into the wall and a crystal chandelier that hung from the ceiling.

I didn’t want to waste all my time today ogling this gorgeous home so I focused on letting Kaiser lead me to my seat – a dark green accent chair. I then placed my bag to the floor in front of the velvet seat.

A mini bean bag and mini table had already been set out by the fireplace. Kaiser being the adorable little helper that he was, brought the bean bag in front of my seat while I grabbed the mini table so I could lay out all my equipment. Within minutes I’d laid out everything I needed, provided Kai with his fruit snacks, his juice box, and my iPad that I’d unlocked to put on Paw Patrol via YouTube.

Gabrielle had requested I do mini box braids on Kai again and me not being one to disappoint my client got started on my job. While wetting and moisturizing Kaiser’s hair, I heard footsteps and I looked up to see Mr. Dangerous Eyes walking into the room. An unexpected wave of desire burst

through me as I watched him saunter into the room like a king who was ready to sit on his throne.

God, even the way he walks is sexy.

He took the cream three-seater to the right of me and I remained focused on Kaiser's hair.

"I would offer you something to drink but I'm not sure you deserve a drink," Mr. Dangerous Eyes said.

I arched a brow but didn't shift my focus from Kaiser's hair.

"You know with you being late and all."

The smile that formed on my lips was unbeatable and I let it grow as I started detangling Kaiser's curls.

"Well thank God I'm not thirsty," I replied, expecting to hear a swift reply from him but when one didn't come I was unable to fight off the temptation to steal a glance of him.

He was looking right at me and his intense stare was enough to make heat curl down my spine. There was a small smile on his lips and I tried to slow my heartbeat, to cool the warmth that spread through my body.

I dropped my gaze from him and we then fell into a comfortable silence. The only thing you could hear was the Paw Patrol Cartoon I'd put on for Kaiser on my iPad. Despite my attention being on Kaiser's hair I couldn't stop the fluttering feeling in my stomach because of the eyes I knew were on me.

About ten minutes later, I spoke up to ask, "Are you just going to sit there and watch me?"

"Is that a crime?"

"No… but I figured you'd want to watch TV or something."

"Nah, ain't nothing interesting on right now anyway," he replied. "I'd rather watch you."

I remained silent and parted Kaiser's hair into sections.

"Am I making you nervous, Jordana?"

"No," I said, ignoring the quickening of my heartbeat. I'd just managed to slow it down and now it was betraying me once again.

This was the first time I'd heard him say my name and hearing it come out of him was enough to open the floodgates between my thighs. Everything about the way he pronounced my name I loved. Coming from him, my name sounded like royalty and God had I never wanted to be someone's queen until now.

“You don’t make me nervous.”

I didn’t even have to look at him to know he was smiling. I could just feel the smile that had formed on his face. We both knew I was lying but I wasn’t about to come clean about the way this stranger made me feel.

“Jordana,” the gentle call of my name seconds later made me look up and spot Gabrielle standing in the open doorway of the living room.

“Hey, girl!” I greeted her with a wide smile. “Oh my God, you cut your hair!”

She had the same walnut brown skin as Genesis but they looked nothing alike. Her coffee brown eyes were large and fringed with long lashes, her eyebrows perfectly arched, her lips full and perfect and the curly hair I knew to be past her shoulders was now cut into a side-parted pixie bob.

“You look amazing, Gabi! Wow.”

I kept staring at her, admiring her hair more and more. She rocked short hair well and I loved everything about it on her. Her flawless skin and high cheekbones stood out more which elevated her beauty to a whole new level. She also looked refreshed and I knew that her nap must have done her good.

“Thank you, beautiful and thank you for booking in Kai once again.” She stepped deeper into the room, her face shimmering with delight. “I hope Genesis hasn’t been giving you a hard time. He can be a real old meanie most days.”

It was only now that I realized I hadn’t even known his name all this time.

Genesis.

I’d never heard that name before for a man but something about it for him I loved.

Genesis pulled a face and waved her off. She chuckled, arriving at the sofa he was on and took the empty seat next to him. She playfully poked his cheek before focusing on me and Kaiser.

“How’s my baby doing?”

“He’s being an angel as always,” I replied, taking a peek at him as I braided to see his eyes locked on Paw Patrol.

“Sorry about the change in location. Kaiser hasn’t spent some time with his uncle in a hot minute so we decided to crash here for a few days.”

I nodded while parting out Kaiser’s next braid.

“But I’m sure Genesis has had enough of us now so we’ll be out his hair tomorrow.”

“You know you’re welcome to stay as long as you and Kai like,” Genesis announced and I looked up briefly to notice him reach for her hand.

“I know…” She gently sighed. “But you need your space, Gene. We can’t stay here forever.”

“Yes you ca—”

“Jordy,” Kaiser’s cute little voice sounded, catching everyone’s attention. “Can I have fruit snack pleawse?”

For a three-year-old Kaiser really was well spoken and so sweet. And don’t even get me started on how adorable his face was. How could I ever say no to a face like his?

“Of course you can,” I said, pausing the braid I’d started on his head to reach down and dig into my Telfar bag.

I knew how much Kaiser loved his fruit snacks so I’d come prepared with a second one. I was actually glad Kaiser had asked me for another fruit snack because the conversation happening between Genesis and Gabrielle sounded personal and I wasn’t trying to intrude on family business.

After giving Kaiser his fruit snacks, I resumed his braids and Gabrielle made conversation with me. Genesis kept quiet but his eyes stayed stuck on me as I worked on his nephew’s hair and talked to his sister. It was hard trying not to look in his direction whenever I looked at Gabrielle but I tried my hardest not to let my eyes lock on his.

Gabrielle asked me about how my career was going and I told her about how things were only getting better and better every day. I had so many women trying to book me to do their hair that I was fully booked for the next three months.

I asked her about how her writing was going. Gabrielle was a big-time poet who’d published a few bestselling poetry books and was working on her next bestseller. I found it so cool that she was a popular poet and yet so humble about her success. The first time I’d looked her up, I was in awe at how well she was doing. She’d never even mentioned what she did for a living when I’d first done her tape ins until I asked for her Instagram so I could tag her in my next post. That’s when I realized how many followers she had and I almost lost my shit that I’d had a whole author sitting in my chair.

She also opened up to me about her reasoning behind suddenly cutting her hair.

“Hair holds energy and after all I’ve been through in my life, I decided it was time for a fresh start. This year is a brand new season for me and I wanted my hair to be the representation of that.”

“Wow, girl. I really do admire you taking that bold step of cutting your hair and it looks gorgeous cut! I’m so happy for you.”

“Thank you, Jordana. That really means everything coming from you.”

We continued our casual conversation while I worked on braiding. I’d always been a good multitasker so talking to Gabrielle while braiding Kaiser’s hair wasn’t a challenge for me. Just as I started a new braid on Kai’s head, I felt my left wrist vibrate and I tilted my Apple Watch toward me to read the new messages on my screen.

CC: *Bitchhhh, don’t forget about Friday!!!*

CC: *Don’t even think about flaking on me cause I’ll kill your ass.*

CC: *You know how bad I’ve been craving some mac and cheese.*

I smirked at my cousin’s messages but decided not to pause my work to respond to her. I’d catch up with her hungry ass later. We had a dinner date on Friday and I was sure that she was more excited to eat at her favorite restaurant than catch up with little old me.

Twenty minutes later and I was done with Kaiser’s hair. There was a large mirror in the front foyer which he ran to and we all followed him, watching him smile at how good his mini box braids looked.

“You’re looking flyer than your uncle, kid. Wow, I’m actually jealous,” Genesis announced, gassing up Kai which made his smile turn into a wide grin.

“And what do you say to Jordana, baby?” Gabrielle asked.

“Thank you, Jordyyyy!” he yelled, running up to me and I crouched down so we could embrace.

Jordy was a nickname that no one else but him was allowed to call me. Coming from anyone else it sounded annoying as hell but coming from Kaiser, it was the greatest nickname in the world.

After we hugged, he was running into his mother’s arms and asking about what they were going to eat.

“I guess that’s my cue to go whip something up in the kitchen,” Gabrielle voiced as she held Kaiser in her arms. “Thank you so much,

Jordana. You definitely received the payment, right?"

"Yes, I did." I nodded with a smile. "Thank you so much once again."

She came closer to me and gave me a hug with one arm while the other held Kaiser by her hip. We embraced and despite Kaiser receiving a hug from me not too long ago, he too joined our hug by wrapping his small arm around me, bringing a smile to my face.

"Bye bye, Jordy," he said as our hug ended and I really couldn't take how cute he was.

"Bye bye, handsome," I told him, giving him a small wave.

"I'll see you soon, girl. Get home safe." She turned to look at Kaiser and tickled his cheeks, causing him to giggle. "Come on, munchkin, we gotta find my handsome boy something to eat."

I watched them walk ahead into the dining room and once they were gone, it was just Genesis and I left in the foyer.

"I better get my things," I voiced, heading back to the living room.

It took me a few minutes to tidy up, grab my things and arrive back in the foyer. Genesis had stayed behind while I'd gone to get my things and now that we were alone again, heat spread through every inch of me.

I went toward my shoes, crouched down to put them on and couldn't help but lift my gaze to the man standing a short distance away from me. His soulful dark eyes studied me with an intensity that made my skin melt. Even after how long he'd been staring at me while I'd been at his house, I still wasn't used to his eyes on me and quite frankly, I wasn't sure I'd ever get used to how his stare made every part of my body heat up.

He had his hands buried in his pockets and I wasn't able to stop myself from noticing how well his turtleneck fit his physique. I could see the outline of his muscular frame through his clothes and I'd be lying if I said I didn't get the nasty thought of seeing him naked. But as soon as it popped into my head I immediately pushed it out.

Once I'd placed my shoes back on and stood up, he finally spoke up.

"You did a good job on Kai's hair."

"Thank you," I said, noticing him pull out a stack of paper out his pocket. "Oh, you don't need to worry, Gabi already transferred my payment a few days ago."

He didn't seem to be listening though because he placed the dollar bills into his palm and started counting through them. It wasn't until he was finished counting that I realized he was trying to give me them all.

I immediately shook my head from side to side when he lifted them out toward me.

“You really about to turn down your tip?”

“Yes,” I replied, looking at him like he was crazy. And to me he was crazy because those were one-hundred-dollar bills in his possession and he was counting them like they were nothing. I’d seen more than five bills already and that was confirmation that he was trying to tip me way too much.

“Gabrielle’s already taken care of me,” I insisted, stepping back.

“Well, I’m not Gabi, sweetheart.” He stepped forward with the bills still lifted toward me. “And now I’m taking care of you.”

“I’m fin—”

“This isn’t up for debate, Jordana. It’s yours.”

I shook my head, trying to convince him that this money wasn’t mine.

“You can either take it now or I just find out your details later from Gabi and send it over to you when you get home. The choice is yours.”

After a brief moment of silence, I decided to stop trying to convince him to do something he clearly wasn’t trying to do. Reluctantly I took the money from him and thanked him for it. Our hands touched slightly when I reached for the money and the heat that rushed through me wasn’t one I could ignore. That heat only got worse when he started talking again.

“Next time I give you something please don’t try to change my mind about it. If I want you to have something then you’re having it. You worked hard today and you deserve to be taken care of.”

“Genesis, I appreciate the tip but you don’t need to be giving me extra on the side like this. I’m good.”

“I see someone’s not the greatest listener,” he announced, his dark eyes blazing into mine. “You can be good all you like, love, but what I said is still a fact. You deserve to be taken care of and ain’t no one about to stop me from doing that. Not even you.”

What I really wanted to say was that I could take care of myself and I almost got the urge to tell him that until he said, “Enjoy the rest of your evening, Jordana.”

He walked to the front doors, opened one for me and the cool night air came rushing toward me. I didn’t bother looking at him one last time. I just walked out the door and headed to my car.

As much as I loved doing Kaiser's hair, running into Genesis wasn't something I wanted to do again.

Quit lying to yourself, girl! Running into him is the most excitement you've had in forever.

I admit, I can't remember the last time I had a man make desire overpower every part of me. He clearly wasn't a shy man and that's what scared me the most. He seemed used to getting his way all the time and that's the last thing I needed. A man throwing his weight around and letting it be known that he called the shots. I got a great dose of bold men almost everyday thanks to the men already in my life. I didn't need another one added to the mix.

And then there was the matter of him looking at me nonstop while I worked on Kaiser. It wasn't like I wasn't used to people looking at me while I worked. I worked in one of the most popular salons in the city, I was used to eyes on me all the time. But Genesis's eyes on me felt… *different.*

I just prayed that Gabrielle didn't feel the need to let Kaiser spend some quality time with his uncle at the same time she needed me doing his hair again because being around Genesis was making me feel things I didn't want to feel.

Since when was you feeling things a bad thing? You know you're not a shy one when it comes to getting what you want.

Yeah I wasn't shy at all, especially when it came to getting some dick, but that didn't mean I was about to entertain the possibility of anything happening with Genesis. He was my favorite little customer's uncle and I would never allow anything to happen between us. I didn't care how fine that man was. Him and I were simply acquaintances and acquaintances we would remain.

You know what? You're probably never going to see him again. Doing Kaiser's hair at his uncle's house was a onetime thing. Gabi said so herself. So don't even trip, girl. He's not someone you'll need to be around ever again.

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2
genesis

"YOU'RE TOO *good to me, Gene. Why you put up with all my baggage I'll never know."*

"What I'd tell you about saying that stupid shit? You're not baggage, Gab. You're my sister. Without you and Kai my life ain't worth shit."

And that was the honest truth.

If Gabi and Kai weren't in my life, I knew I would not only feel like a nobody but I'd be one too. I'd be nobody special, nobody important and certainly nobody worth all the attention I got from owning a multimillion dollar company. They were the two people that boosted my mood in ways unimaginable and the two main people I cared about. Nobody came first but them and nobody stayed on my mind like they did.

You liar, my internal voice in my head suddenly said. *Someone else has stayed on your mind since you first laid eyes on her yesterday.*

A whole new day had come but that hadn't stopped my mind from drifting to the woman that had showed up on my doorstep yesterday.

Gabi and Kai spending a few days at mine had been unplanned but Jordana coming over certainly hadn't been. I knew for a fact that Kai was getting tired of all the buns and ponytails Gabi had put his hair in. She had my boy out here looking like a little girl and I couldn't help but titter whenever I watched him run around my 8,000 square foot home.

Braiding hair wasn't Gabi's forte at all and ever since Kai had grown a whole head of hair, the best she could do was shampoo, blow dry and put his hair into buns and ponytails. She wasn't ready to cut his hair off yet and I understood that because he'd only had his length for just under a year.

He'd taken out the buns and ponytails many times during his stay with me because he was a kid and kids loved getting into some shit. It wasn't long 'til Gabi was mentioning that as soon as they got back home, she'd be booking Kai a hair appointment with the woman who had done such a good job last time with his box braids.

I was confused as to why Gabi wanted to wait until she got home to book Kai's appointment. Why not just book it ASAP? But then she explained that Jordana did special house calls for Kaiser because of how busy the all-woman salon she worked at got. And that's when I made the suggestion for Jordana to come over to my house. Of course, Gabi being the worrier that she was wasn't sure about the idea at first.

"Gene, are you sure? I don't want us invading your personal space."

"This house is just as much yours as it is mine and besides I'm sure Kai is tired of you having him look rough."

"Uh-uh! Don't be calling my baby boy rough!"

I chuckled before stating, "Book the appointment, sis. Time to get my little king right."

She nodded and didn't waste time whipping out her phone to book Kai's appointment.

Now I didn't just let any and everybody come over to the place I laid my head most nights or even let just anyone know my address. Only three people knew my address, one of those people being my sister. But I trusted my sister's judgement which is why I resisted the urge to ask Gabi for Jordana's details so I could do some digging about the woman who would be entering my home for the very first time.

What a time it had been… a time I hadn't stopped replaying over and over again in my mind.

I wasn't able to take my eyes off her while she'd been at my spot and I wasn't even about to play games with myself by denying the truth.

She's fucking beautiful.

Anyone with eyes could see that shit but it wasn't just her outer appearance that I found beautiful. It was all the ways she'd expressed herself while being in my presence. From the way she'd not taken my lateness comment to heart and thrown her own teasing remark back at me, the way she connected with Kai like he was family to her and the way she treated Gabrielle like they were long lost sisters from another mother and most of all, the way her eyes lit up when she was carrying out her passion.

There was no doubt about it, she was doing the thing she loved the most. Looking at her while she worked told me that and it also told me that I didn't want to stop seeing that light in her eyes. Was it wrong of me to entertain the idea of me being another reason for the light in her eyes?

Nah… that's crazy, right? You don't even know her.

It was crazy yet I didn't care how it sounded. I didn't truly know Jordana nor had she been in my presence for more than an hour and yet I wanted to be the reason for the light in her eyes.

I was smitten by her… How could I not be?

She had all the physical attributes that could make a man willing to do whatever she wanted. From her flawless golden beige skin, her thick curly hair, those plump lips to those angelic brown eyes and don't even get me started on that body… Jordana Evans was a beauty. She was tall yet I still towered over her and I absolutely loved that shit.

What I also loved was the way her jeans hugged her curvaceous figure and created the perfect outline of those thick thighs. She'd come dressed in a black fitted Nike hoodie and denim jeans. Despite her comfy and casual outfit, it took nothing away from her attractiveness, in fact it only elevated it. Comfy and casual on anyone else was basic but on her it was everything.

Meeting her in person yesterday had stirred something deep inside me that I wasn't able to control. Something made me want to protect her from anything and everything this world had to throw at her. Looking into her almond shaped eyes, a serenity like no other washed over my soul and I was struck with the realization that her effect on me was something serious.

But she was stubborn. When she'd tried to decline my tip, I knew right then and there that I had a woman who was all on her *'I don't need a man for shit'* vibe. I didn't have a problem with women being independent but what I couldn't stand was when women declined assistance that was rightfully theirs. I wanted to tip Jordana and there wasn't a single soul who was going to stop me from doing that including her stubborn ass.

"I've just received an email from our Italian vendor, Sir. The Masseto order has been delayed again."

A deep voice pulled me away from my intimate thoughts and I was reminded that I wasn't alone. While I'd been thinking, my eyes had stayed trained on my iPad that currently showcased Asana, the online workspace my team and I used.

"We can't—"

“You know how much I hate the word can’t, Ash,” I announced, letting my fingers slide across my device so I could browse through Asana and see to it that all tasks for the day had been done. It wasn’t even twelve p.m. yet but I liked knowing that my team had completed what needed to be done early.

Ash went silent and despite me not looking at his face right now I could sense the stress lines forming in his forehead. Rather than saying more, I kept my attention on my iPad and seeing that everyone’s tasks for the day had been ticked off made me lean back against my chair.

“Can’t has never been and never will be an option here. You know that,” I reminded Ash, finally lifting my eyes, and staring right at him. Just as I’d predicted, his caramel forehead was creased. “When we need a job done we use everything in our power to get it done.”

“I know, Sir,” he replied with a sigh. “But they’ve delayed our order for another seventy-two hours.”

Now it was my turn to sigh. Problems were one of the things I hated the most in life and hearing about the problem happening in my company was only making my irritation heighten.

“I need solutions, guys,” I said, this time addressing everyone in the room. “That’s our bestselling wine on the line right now. We’ve had too many requests for it and not a single bottle is in stock.”

Right now, I had a group of people I liked to call my *inner circle* in my office. Every month we had a team meeting to make sure that my baby, GW Eleven, was being run smoothly and according to plan. Kross was my general manager, Jaime, my assistant manager, Reya, my executive chef, Keanu, my kitchen manager and Ashton, my food and beverage manager.

I’d hired an all-black team to help me run my shit and I was proud of that. GW Eleven was one of the top fine dining restaurants in the city and last year we’d grossed eight figures. I had my inner circle to thank for my company being such a success and I knew that no matter what I could always count on them to elevate GW Eleven. Sure, I was little hard on them at times but they understood that my strictness was simply my way of pushing them to the very best that they could be. At the end of the day, it was all love from my end and that love showed immensely from the fat pay checks they received every month.

They were all seated on the far right of the large sized room, on the best leather couches that money could buy. I wasn’t a fan of us having our

meetings in conference rooms because I liked my inner circle comfortable. Our monthly meetings however definitely had to be in a conference room because those meetings were with the entire GW Eleven staff which was over thirty people. I didn't need or want that many bodies in my office.

Usually, our monthly meetings consisted of me being a silent soul in the room and hearing whatever general things needed to be said by my team. It was while Kross had been talking about our brand ambassador's visit on Friday that my thoughts had gotten the best of me and I was thinking about no one else but Jordana. However, now that Ash had brought up a problem, I could no longer allow my thoughts to take control. Business always came first and now more than ever I needed a quick fix for the situation with GW Eleven's bestselling wine.

The team had gone silent and I could tell they were deep in thought about what I'd said. I really did need a solution to our wine order being delayed. Those bottles were not cheap and our customers loved them. And one thing I couldn't stand was disappointing my customers.

"I've just emailed them back telling them we've found a new vendor and we want a refund," Ash announced moments later, making everyone including me look at him with wide eyes.

"What the hell?" Jaime was the first person to speak up. "We still need that order, Ash. And we most definitely don't have a new vendor."

"You're right," Ash replied with a self-assured look. "But the same way we need that order is the same way they need us. We…"

Ash's gaze fell back on his MacBook screen and he stopped talking. Within seconds, a bright smile formed on his lips.

"They're sending out double what we ordered free of charge to apologize for the delay," he explained. "And they're using a different shipping courier which will be delivered in twenty-four hours."

Everyone couldn't stop smiling after he'd said that and they all started singing his praises. I was extremely glad that Ash had taken the initiative to put a fire up our vendors's asses. Though it'd been a bold move, it had worked greatly in our favor.

"My man," I spoke up after the team had settled down on praising him. "See what happens when you ditch the word can't and just put your mind to getting the job done?"

Ash nodded and replied, "You're right, boss."

“I want all of you to remember that too,” I told them. “Fuck the word can’t. You can and will get done whatever it is that you need to do. I didn’t hire y’all for no reason. You’re the best at what you do or you wouldn’t be sitting here in the first place. Don’t doubt yourselves.”

“Yes, boss,” they all replied in unison.

“A’ight, that’s enough motivational, sweet talk for you babies. Get out there and go make me some money.”

They all laughed and I cracked a small smile watching as they got up, grabbed their shit, and told me goodbye before leaving my office. Silence filled the space around me but the thoughts rushing through my mind were anything but silent.

The thing I usually liked about work was how distracting it could be. I had a smooth-running operation that I’d built over the years to run without my physical presence but sometimes I needed an outlet away from my personal life. Business always proved to be the greatest outlet. However, today work wasn’t proving to be a strong enough outlet because Jordana’s heart shaped face refused to stop popping in and out my head.

I wasn’t mad about her distracting me though because I quite liked the thought of her in my mind. But just because I liked thinking about her didn’t mean I was going to spend all my time today focusing on a woman who I probably wasn’t going to cross paths with again.

I reached forward for my phone that was face down on my desk and unlocked it. I’d put my phone on do not disturb during my meeting but now that it was done, I had no use for the feature. The time read 11:11 a.m. and seeing the two numbers that I saw every day without fail caused warmth to radiate through my chest. After taking the DND feature off, I headed straight to the iMessage app and I was greeted to three new messages.

The first one from Gabi read: *Thank you for being such a good brother. As much as I want to tell you to stop worrying about me so much, I know that without you in my life I wouldn’t be the woman I am today. I love you more than words could ever describe.*

The second one from the last person I was trying to talk to right now read: *Call me when you get this nephew. We need to talk.*

The third one from the pain in my ass aka my best friend, Dane: *Nigga, I hope you ain’t forgotten about Friday?*

After responding to Gabi and telling her that I loved her too I was entering my chat with Dane to type: *Friday? The fuck is happening on*

Friday?

Within seconds, three gray dots appeared in our chat and his reply came shooting in.

Dane: *I'll fuck you up.*

Me: *With those sticks you call arms?*

Me: *I don't think so, my guy.*

I smirked down at the middle finger emoji that quickly entered our chat.

Me: *I ain't forgotten about Friday.*

Me: *Trust me even if I forgot my whole staff is prepped and ready.*

Me: *Charlie's got them wrapped around her little finger.*

Dane: *That's what I like to hear.*

Dane: *Honestly she's got me wrapped just as bad.*

Me: *Oh believe me I know.*

Me: S*till can't believe you convinced me to hire a brand ambassador in the first place.*

Dane: *And who now has 500k IG followers on his restaurant's page because of my idea?*

Me: *Don't get cocky.*

Me: *That was all her and had nothing to do with your annoying ass.*

Dane: *Remind me to tell Charlie to make a Tik Tok tonight about GW Eleven's horrible owner?*

Dane: *I'm sure that shit's about to go viral in less than 24 hours.*

Now it was my turn to send the middle finger emoji into the chat and it wasn't long 'til Dane's three laughing emojis came flying in.

Charlie aka Charlotte Carter was the brand ambassador I'd hired four months ago because Dane had told me to do so. There weren't many people in this world who could make me do things but luckily for Dane he was one of those few. As annoying as he was, Dane was my boy and I considered him to be family.

He owned Opal Dynasty, the largest social media marketing agency in the country. He had a team that helped him manage the top social media influencers in the game and connected them with major brands and companies.

When he'd first told me about his idea for GW Eleven to hire an influencer I thought he was tripping. What exactly could an Instagram girl do for my empire that I wasn't already doing? But when he showed me what Charlie had already been doing for GW Eleven without me even fully

taking notice of until now, I knew for sure that Charlie was no girl. She was a *woman* who was killing the Instagram game.

She loved GW Eleven's food and I didn't blame her because I'd hired some of the best chefs in the country to chef it up in my kitchen. She had so many damn followers on IG that loved watching her lifestyle so her first couple visits here, she'd tag our Instagram page on the videos she captured of our food and drinks which would bring a cascade of followers onto our Instagram.

When my manager, Kross, had first told me about how our marketing division had noticed the influx of young adults, in particular young African American women, following our page, I chalked it up to our marketing team doing a good ass job in promoting my company better to the younger folk. But then Dane had proved me wrong and told me that it was because of Charlie that our social media presence had grown.

He'd been the one to recommend my restaurant to her in the first place and to the other top influencers he managed. Charlie was the one that had actually taken his advice and tried GW Eleven out because unlike those other influencers, she was willing to try a new restaurant out without getting a free meal. One thing about most influencers, they loved some free shit but Charlie was genuine. She came for the experience and not because she wanted free food and drinks.

GW Eleven already got a lot of customers every day but because of Charlie we were having so many people trying to book a table every damn week that I knew there was no way in hell I could turn down Dane's idea for me to hire Charlie. I'd be a fool to not see the potential in her and the great things she could do for GW Eleven.

So, I hired her.

Thanks to Charlie, GW Eleven now had bottomless brunch every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday until seven p.m., but instead of regular mimosas flowing nonstop throughout your meal, we had bottomless mimosas, bottomless bellinis and cocktails of any kind. There were already so many restaurants out there doing bottomless brunch and Charlie had suggested we do something different to stay ahead of the competition.

Thanks to Charlie we also had an entertainment night every Saturday with live music, performers, and dancers. Entertainment nights weren't anything new but what made ours stand out was the exclusive performance we had every few months from a popular artist. So far we'd had Summer

Walker, Jhené Aiko, Blxst, Lucky Daye and my entertainment team were working on getting Kaytranada to come and do a special DJ set next month in our bar room. Charlie suggesting we get an artist to perform while people enjoyed GW Eleven's cuisine and drinks had been one of her best ideas yet and I was glad she'd come up with it.

And how could I forget about the free photo booth idea that she'd come up with to include in our bar room for customers to capture memories. She'd come up with so many invigorating ideas to help spruce GW Eleven up and I couldn't lie, I was impressed. Impressed because not only were the ideas good but they were actually working.

She was young yet intelligent and she'd proven that being an influencer wasn't just about making money. It was about helping others as she'd definitely helped my company become bigger and better.

She'd only been a brand ambassador for four months but four months was all she'd needed to take our IG from 10k to 500k. In addition to her ideas, she would promote GW Eleven whenever she visited, bringing more awareness to my restaurant to her growing 1.5 million followers on Instagram and 500k followers on Tik Tok. And she didn't ask for free food or drinks, she paid the bill in the full every time she visited and I loved how dedicated she was to supporting a black business like mine.

GW Eleven wasn't a cheap spot but it was worth every single penny and I'm not just saying that because I own it. The food and experience alone proved its worthiness and now that Charlie had promoted my restaurant online, she'd shown her followers that our food was extremely worth it. She'd proven to be a great asset to my company so far and I definitely had Dane to thank for that.

This Friday, Charlie would be coming down to GW Eleven to try the new drink that my mixologist had named after her.

The CC.

It was only right that Charlie Carter had a drink named after her in the restaurant that she'd helped grow. If she liked it enough then it'd be added to the drink menu and every time someone ordered it, she'd earn 50% commission on the order.

She'd brought in a lot of clientele for GW Eleven so I had a soft spot for her which was why I felt no ways about paying her five figures for each GW Eleven promotional post she did on IG or Tik Tok.

We didn’t see each other all the time when she was here to talk business because I wasn’t in 24/7 but whenever she was here, my marketing team took good care of her.

I also had a soft spot for her because Dane was sprung over her. He believed that she only saw him as a good friend and even an older brother but I wasn’t so sure about that. His love for her was undeniable and he’d gone above and beyond for that girl to ensure her influencer career blossomed more and more each day. She’d secured brand deals with companies like Fenty Beauty, Fenty Skin, Skims, Pretty Little Thing, Hello Fresh and he was in the midst of secretly securing her a podcast deal with Spotify.

I knew she’d be over the moon to know what he’d done but I just prayed my boy didn’t get his hopes up thinking that securing her all these deals was going to make her fall in love with him. She had to want him because of how he made her feel, not because of what he did for her.

Jordana’s certainly made you feel things you haven’t felt in forever.

And there it was. My little voice in the back of my head that just couldn’t help itself. Indeed, Jordana had made me feel things I hadn’t felt in forever but the chances of us crossing paths again was rare. Not impossible but rare, nonetheless. Convincing myself that I wasn’t going to see her again so that I wouldn’t get my hopes up was what I was determined to do from here on out. I couldn’t let myself get comfortable with the idea of that beauty constantly being in my orbit.

I knew that Gabi wasn’t going to go out of her way to always make sure that her and Kaiser were here at my crib whenever he needed his hair done. Even though I could make that shit happen, I knew how much Gabi loved being able to do things the way she saw them best.

She hated invading my space even though I told her a thousand times that she was doing nothing of the sort. My space was just as much as hers as it was mine. Honestly, I’d only bought that big ass house in the hopes that her and Kaiser would move in with me but she was determined to have her own home. However, any time she needed me I was always going to be there for her. No matter what. She was stuck with me until the day I took my last breath and even when I was gone from this earth, my spirit would surely watch over her and Kai.

Jordana would just have to remain a sweet thought in the back of my mind. I would soon forget about her, the way she’d made me feel and how

bad I wished I could be the reason for the light shining bright in her gorgeous eyes.

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3
jordana

THERE WAS nothing greater than being able to see the joy that I brought to my clients and as I now ran my fingers through my latest client's curls, I was reminded of just how grateful I was to see the effect my work had on people.

"Wow…" Her big brown eyes sparkled as she watched me fluff out her hair. "You really are the goat of this shit, Jordana."

My lips lifted into a smile, matching the bright one that I could see on her pink glossy lips.

"What would I do without you?"

"No what would *I* do without you trusting little old me to do your hair?"

"Girl, please. You know there's no one that I'd ever go to but you," Kennedy, one of my regulars stated and my smile only strengthened.

This. This right here was one of the many reasons why being a hairstylist would always have my heart. This right here was how I knew that I was doing the number one thing that I was born to do.

Staring at Kennedy's reflection in the LED full length mirror in front of us made my heart swell. She couldn't stop smiling and gushing over how good her tape ins looked. I'd installed a fresh set of dark brown tape in extensions to match her natural hair color and lightly curled them to provide her with a cute yet sexy look.

"That hair is fucking bomb," Kymani, the hair stylist in the station next to me said. "You really did your thing, boo."

I tore my eyes away from Kennedy's pretty reflection to look over at Kymani.

"Thank you, Ky." I smiled at her.

I swear all this constant smiling was making me feel like a little kid in a candy shop who was being spoiled recklessly. The only difference here was rather than being spoiled with candy, I was being spoiled with compliments and I couldn't lie, when it came to my work, I loved hearing people compliment it.

"You've been killing it over there too," I told Kymani. "Those Fulani braids are looking really good."

"Oh, you know how I do," Kymani stated in a playful, cocky tone. "Gotta show the hoes in here how it's really done you know?" She winked and stuck her tongue out.

Within seconds, the three other stylists turned to look at her with rude looks before their faces cracked into amused expressions. It wasn't long before they were all joking back and forth with Kymani. I let out a few chuckles at their playful conversation and once they were done joking around, I complimented each of the girls on the current hairstyles they were doing on their clients.

There were five hairstylists working at one of the top salons in the city, Aubrey's Artistry and I was one of them. We each rented a chair here and had our own specialties when it came to hairstyles. I specialized in sew ins, tape ins and ponytails whereas Kymani specialized in braids alongside another hair stylist, Taylor. Aja did wigs and Leilani did silk presses and hair coloring.

Working in a space with black women was great but I couldn't lie, when I'd first started here, I mostly kept to myself… well *tried* to keep to myself. Kymani was Mrs. Sociable and wouldn't let me spend a whole day in the salon without talking to me about something. And when she started conversation with me, the rest of the girls would quickly follow. Now ten months later and the girls and I were getting closer and closer each day.

I appreciated the effort they made in trying to keep me vocal, especially Kymani, because if I had it my way, I wouldn't say a word. I'd just keep my head down and get my work done. You can thank the trauma of having my ex-best friend stab me in the back three years ago for that. I didn't have female friends but I guess if I had to choose another friend other than my cousin, it would be Kymani and the girls. When I'd first started, they'd all made the effort in keeping me involved their conversations which made me feel welcomed and part of the family. I was thankful that they'd taken a liking to me and felt the need to include me in the shop's dynamics.

Friday had finally come and although I'd enjoyed working these past couple days, I was more than ready for the weekend. There was nothing like being able to wind down after a long working week and baby, after all the hours I'd put in this week, I definitely deserved the evening I was about to have tonight.

After taking photographs and videos of Kennedy's hair, she sent over her Apple Pay payment for my services and said her goodbyes. Once she'd left, I focused on cleaning my workstation and getting my things in order so I could head home. But the call of my name less than five minutes later broke my focus.

"Jordana," a gentle voice sounded, making me turn away from my station.

I looked over at the far end of the salon where a short, bronze skinned woman stood with her iPad Air in hand.

"Aubrey would like to see you in her office please."

"Uh-uh, look like someone's in trouble with the boss lady," I heard Kymani announce and I looked over at her to see the smirk she wore.

Rather than giving into her teasing, I playfully rolled my eyes at her before making my way across the room to where Summer stood. As I came closer, she sent a warm smile my way which I returned before she turned to lead the way down a short walkway leading to Aubrey's office.

We arrived outside a white door and Summer knocked twice before pushing the door's handle and entering the room.

Behind an L shaped desk sat no one other than Aubrey Payne. Her last name was actually quite fitting because one thing Aubrey certainly knew how to be was a pain in my as—

"Jordana," she called my name without looking up from her iMac's screen. "Have a seat."

I stepped deeper into the room and did as she asked, taking the right leather seat in front of her desk. Even though I now sat in front of her, she still wasn't looking at me but that didn't stop me from staring at her.

Her matte black tape ins that I'd installed on her just under a week ago were pulled back into a ponytail, emphasizing her oval shaped face. She had coffee brown skin, thin eyebrows, honey brown eyes and bow shaped lips. An undeniable beauty but also an undeniable annoyance and I knew that whatever reason she'd summoned me in for was about to be the biggest annoyance of my day.

“Are house calls going to be a regular service you provide now?”

Not a hello, not even a how are you, just straight to the point. That was always the case with Aubrey and though I’d grown accustomed to it, I wasn’t a fan of how standoffish she could be.

“Not all the tim—”

“Because if they are I’d prefer it if you did house calls on your days off. I can’t and won’t stop you from seeing your clients outside of the salon but I’d much prefer it if you were actually here on the days you’re supposed to be here.”

Her honey brown eyes rose from the computer screen to land on me and the hard stare she cast my way made uneasiness rise inside of me. Rather than saying anything in response, I let her continue talking since it was clear she had a whole load to get off her chest today.

“I’ve had over five calls this week alone and ten emails through the salon’s website for your services and when I’ve tried to book them in through the portal, you’re either already booked or have blocked out the times you’re doing a house call.”

The portal was the online scheduling system that Aubrey had set up for the salon. It was how clients who were coming into the salon booked an appointment with one of the stylists. They would choose a time that they wanted to come to the salon, fill out a form with their details and pay a deposit to secure their appointment.

The deposits went to the salon so basically in Aubrey’s pocket, which I didn’t mind because Aubrey wasn’t greedy. She used the deposits to make improvements to the salon and treat us occasionally.

All the hairstylists had an account through the portal, allowing us to access a digital calendar that was shared with Aubrey. On the calendar we had our booking availability and each time a client booked with us their name would automatically appear on the calendar.

The portal was also where Aubrey could send us important announcements/information that she needed us to know. And we could post our own announcements too. Think of it as a social media platform but just for the salon.

“You and the rest of the girls are the face of my brand, Jordana. Being the face of my brand means that you hold the responsibility to show up whenever I need you to. How do you think it looks if I have one of my top

stylists in high demand but I can't even log onto the salon's scheduling portal and book in an appointment with her? It's not a good look at all."

Aubrey let out a deep sigh and leaned back into her leather chair, letting her hands hold onto the arms of her seat.

"I need you here on the days you agreed to be here. If being here isn't something that you want anymore then you know what you can do."

She knew damn well that I wasn't going anywhere. Aubrey's Artistry had been good to me and I liked working in a salon with other stylists. Well, I'd told myself many times that I wasn't going anywhere but I'd be lying if I said the thought of owning my own studio space hadn't crossed my mind many times.

"Understood?"

It was clear by her firm tone that she wasn't actually trying to hear what I had to say. She just wanted me to listen and follow what she'd said. As much as I wanted to spazz out on her, I couldn't. This was her salon after all and I was working under her rules.

Though I didn't do house calls often, I did do them whenever I'd been requested to by clients who wanted a bit more privacy and comfort. They were willing to pay extra to get a private appointment with yours truly in their home and who was I to stop them? I knew that not everyone liked being in a busy salon and some of my clients had very busy schedules that didn't allow them to just drop everything and come into the salon.

The days I did do house calls, I would still be in the salon but only for certain hours of the day. I'd usually use the second, later half of the day to head to my house call like I'd done on Wednesday to visit Kaiser. But on Thursday I came into the salon after lunchtime because I had to visit a fitness model in the early hours of the morning who needed her hair done way before the salon even opened. So, it's not like I was completely going ghost on the salon. I still showed up on the days I was supposed to be here.

But you know what? I wasn't here to argue with Aubrey. If me doing house calls was such a big problem for her then I'd simply re-allocate the days I did them as she wanted.

"Understood," I replied. "Am I free to go?"

"Yes, you are," she said but before she'd even finished her sentence I was already out of my seat and heading to the door.

The person who had summoned me here in the first place, Summer, Aubrey's assistant, and our receptionist, stood by the door but quickly

moved out of the way when I was coming closer to her.

Once I was out of Aubrey's office, I let out a deep sigh and headed back to my workstation.

Now this is what I'd grown to hate. This being the constant summoning, questioning and demanding that Aubrey did. Those were things that made me question whether or not remaining at her salon was a good idea.

I'd joined Aubrey's Artistry ten months ago when I'd realized that doing hair full time was what I desired to do. Initially I'd been working as a receptionist at a top law firm and doing hair part time in my apartment. But once I'd grown a small yet loyal following of customers and had more than ten thousand dollars saved up in my savings account, I knew that the time to start living life on my own terms was now. The only thing I wasn't willing to do was work full time in my apartment. I needed a new environment to work in and I wanted to be part of a salon that could provide me with the exposure I needed to have a steady flow of clients weekly.

That's where Aubrey's Artistry came in. Her salon was the top black hair salon in the city and I knew working here would take my career to the next level. Getting in wasn't easy but when I'd impressed Aubrey by giving her a deep conditioning treatment and tape ins, she decided to add me to her team of four. It was because of me that there were now five hair stylists instead of four.

Though I appreciated the platform and exposure Aubrey's Artistry had provided me with, I'd be a fool to act like I hadn't earned every client that I'd slayed the hair of.

I'd worked my butt off and grown my Instagram following from two thousand followers to twenty-five thousand in the ten months I'd been at Aubrey's. I now had more followers than the Aubrey's Artistry Instagram page that had fifteen thousand followers.

I was becoming more and more popular every single day, gaining hundreds and hundreds of followers who were anxiously trying to book an appointment with me. I was already booked up for this entire month and we were only four days into the month.

I understood Aubrey wanting me to only do my house calls on the days I wasn't in which were Mondays and Saturdays but what I couldn't understand was the standoffish nature Aubrey showed toward me.

Though Aubrey had never seen any of the hairstylists as her friends, more like business partners, it was becoming harder and harder every single

day enjoying having Aubrey as a partner. I was supposed to be a partner but she treated me like an employee who had to tell her every single thing that was going on with my career. Though I'd become extremely popular while being at her salon, at the end of the day, I'd earned every single customer that had been in my chair. I also hated the way she talked down at me sometimes, like I was a little child that needed to be corrected on the errors of my ways.

Aubrey may not have actually said this to my face but I was pretty sure that she felt like she'd made me become successful. She may have aided the process but I'd earned my stripes with my skills and I would continue earning them if I ever decided to leave.

Leaving wasn't something I was particularly open to because like I said I loved working around other women and honestly, the thought of getting my own space was terrifying. I'd only been doing this full time for ten months, getting my own space this early in my career seemed too premature.

What if I failed? What if no one wanted to book me anymore once I ventured out and did my own thing?

It all seemed so damn scary and I wasn't sure I had it in me to be independent. But worrying about leaving Aubrey's salon was the last thing I wanted to do for the rest of the day. All I wanted to do was get home and get ready for my night out with the number woman person who never failed to put a smile on my face. She was also the main reason as to why I'd gained so many followers these past couple months and I couldn't wait to fill her up with tequila as I gassed her up about how great she was and how lucky my basic ass was to have her as my cousin.

She said she wasn't going to be late. I really should've known better than to trust her because that girl couldn't be on time for shit. I was convinced that she'd be late to her own damn funeral if she could actually attend it. Luckily for her that wasn't a ceremony she'd ever be present for and as for the date of said ceremony, I was certain it was a light years away because Charlie was way too fit, way too young and way too sexy for death to come knocking on her door anytime soon.

CC: *I’m ten minutes away.*

I smirked at her text from fifteen minutes ago. A text I knew was a lie as soon as I’d first glanced at it. A part of me believed it but deep down inside of me, I knew she was selling me dreams. And once that ten-minute mark passed, I was reminded of how much Charlie loved playing me and because of the love I had for her, staying mad at her was always impossible.

No matter how hard I tried, I just couldn’t be mad at that girl for more than a few minutes. Her kindhearted nature didn’t help the situation either and I knew I’d forever be a simp for her. And because I was a simp for her, I’d finally given in and taken her up on her offer to head to one of Houston’s top-rated restaurants, GW Eleven. It was a steakhouse but had a few seafood dishes too.

Charlie was an avid fan of the restaurant and I didn’t blame her because if I was getting five figures a post to promote this boujee ass place then I’d be an avid fan too. Thanks to her posts, she’d helped the restaurant attract a younger crowd and was hired as a brand ambassador. I was extremely proud of all the success constantly coming her way. She’d worked hard for everything she got in this life and it was honestly so good to see her reaping the benefits of her hard work.

Everyone in the world knew how much food meant to Charlie. Despite her slim size, the girl could eat a whole house down. She had an Instagram highlight dedicated to food alone and on our previous trips to restaurants, I always took notice of how much food she ordered. I envied how she could pack away so much food into her tiny body and it wouldn’t show. But if I even breathed the smell of food in, I gained weight. I’d learned to love my body over time though and I appreciated the curves that graced my frame.

Not only did Charlie post promotional posts for GW Eleven from time to time, her Instagram food highlight contained videos and photographs of basically the entire menu. She knew the menu inside and out because she’d tried everything on it.

She’d raved on and on about how bomb the mac and cheese was here when we’d gotten into a debate about the dish and from that moment, I knew I had to try it. So here I sat, ready to try it. Well ready to try it as soon as Charlie was bothered to grace me with her presence.

After taking one last look at her text, I locked my phone and placed it down to the table. I reached for the long-stemmed glass in front of me,

bringing it to my lips and taking a sip of the lemon drop martini I'd ordered a few minutes ago.

I'd requested tequila rather than the usual vodka lemon drops came with. One thing about me and tequila? I couldn't resist her which was why I was sipping her now without a care in the world.

While sipping, I let my eyes travel around the room, admiring the fancy decor of this establishment. Everything about it screamed opulence. It had circular tables, gray seating, hanging pendant lights and vibrant colored paintings were placed on a few gray walls. The booth that Charlie had booked or should I say had been personally given to her, was set against a gray wall, providing me with a great view of the restaurant and gave off the vibe that I was someone important. I'd received enough glances from people present to know that they were sizing me up, trying to see if they knew me from somewhere. I was more than happy to disappoint them all because I knew the real star of the show was arriving soon and they'd be able to stare at her till their hearts were content.

I took one final sip from my cocktail before placing my glass down. The cocktail was almost finished. Just one more sip and it'd be all done. I wasn't trying to get tipsy today all by myself but Charlie really wasn't leaving me with much of a choice.

Where the hell is she?

Charlie aka Charlotte Carter aka my bad bitch cousin was a social media influencer who had over 1.5M followers on Instagram, over 500k on Tik Tok and just under 100k on Twitter. She'd started taking Instagram seriously just under a year ago and became consistent with posting photographs which resulted in her gaining a large following. Then she became consistent on other platforms and it was pretty much up from there.

Charlie had a likable personality that many women resonated with, a lifestyle that many were inspired by and her attractive face sure as hell helped bring in more people to her social media profiles. And because of Charlie taking Instagram seriously at the same time that I started doing hair full time, whenever I did her hair she would tag me in her photographs, bringing a cascade of new customers my way.

My own cousin had helped me secure many bags these past couple months and I would forever be indebted to her for being such a generous soul. She really didn't have to post me at all. Yeah we were family but that didn't mean anything. Business was business at the end of the day and I

knew that Charlie had all these major brands lacing her with coins to promote their shit. When I attempted to pay her for an Instagram tag, she literally laughed in my face and pushed me away from her like I was the one in the wrong. She wouldn't let me pay at all.

The same way she felt about me not paying her for a tag was the same way I felt about her not paying me to do her hair. But that was one thing she refused to do. When it came to me doing her hair, she had to literally throw money in my face for me to take it because she knew if she tried to Cash App or Apple Cash me, I'd send it right the fuck back.

That was my Charlie though and I knew that without her in my life, I really would have no true female friends. I'd be stuck with the three men in my life who were convinced that they were my fathers.

Ding! Ding!

My eyes dropped to my phone's screen that had lit up. I felt my spirits soar when I assumed that Charlie was probably outside right now, about to joke with me through iMessage and say how she wasn't even that late.

Jas: *Yo, Peanut.*
Jas: *Why ain't you texted us back all day?*
Jai: *You know how her rude ass be.*
Jai: *Ignoring us like we don't know where she stay.*
Jax: *She's probably still mad we ate all her BBQ wings.*
Jai: *Those wings were fireeeee!!*
Jai: *I need me some of those again.*

But my assumptions were nothing but ill-founded because the very men I'd conjured up in my mind were now blowing my phone up. Not Charlie.

Jas: *Yeah I can't even lie those wings were fire.*
Jai: *She needs to hurry up and buy some again.*
Jai: *I need those ASAP.*
Jas: *Stop acting brand new, Peanut.*
Jas: *You good?*
Jax: *Yeah she good.*
Jax: *Just peeped her IG stories.*
Jax: *She's at some boujee ass restaurant downtown.*

Jai: *She must be on a date.*
Jas: *A date?*
Jas: *With who?*
Jai: *What y'all thinking about us crashing her party?*
Jas: *I'm down.*
Jax: *Yeah let's go.*

I didn't hesitate to unlock my phone and enter the group chat I shared with the three men who had suddenly decided one day that I was their baby sister which didn't make any sense because I was the oldest.

Me: *Remind me to block all your nosy asses from my Instagram!*
Jas: *Try that shit and you ain't ever going out anywhere again.*
Jax: *Don't get your ass beat, Peanut.*
Jai: *You must be ready to be the new Rapunzel.*
Jai: *Gonna have to lock your ass up so you know not to play with us.*
Jai: *Only difference is you gon' be bald headed cause ain't no nigga climbing up your hair to save your ass.*
Laughing emojis came flying into the chat from all three of them and I fought off the smile trying to appear on my lips.
Me: *I hate you all.*
Me: *I'm alive. Not on a date. Waiting on CC.*
Me: *Now leave me alone, losers.*
Me: *Goodnight!*
Jas: *Your rude ass.*
Jai: *Keep this same energy when you need something from us.*
Jax: *Yeah keep that same energy, Jordana Adeline Evans.*

Jax using my full name was his way of telling me that he wasn't playing with me. Like that was about to change my attitude toward them.
I don't know who decided to put a hex on me by giving me three younger brothers who treated me like the baby of the group, but I'm sure they were having a good old laugh about how I'd been treated these past few years.
Jasiel, Jaxson, and Jaiden Evans were the three men that drove me crazy whenever they could but honestly if I had to choose to live life without

them then I knew my life would be pointless. They were my protectors and the three men I could count on in this life. The *only* men I would ever count on.

Despite how much I loved them, I'd decided to ghost them in our group chat. Yeah, I was still salty as hell about what they'd done because those wings were from the best wing spot in the city and I was looking forward to eating them. But of course, Jaxson just had to be nosy and head to my Instagram to see the lemon drop I'd taken a Boomerang of and tagged GW Eleven as my location.

I really need to block their asses for real.

My brothers texting me had distracted me from being annoyed with Charlie's lateness but now that our group chat had died down, I was reminded of my cousin's current transgression.

Ten minutes away my ass! That girl probably just left her house a few minutes ago.

I left the group chat I shared with my brothers and headed to Charlie's chat but something stopped me from typing out a new message. I felt the urge to look up from my phone but as soon as I did, my entire soul felt like it'd been set on fire.

Oh… God.

It wasn't something that had stopped me from typing out a new message… it was *someone* . Someone who I never thought in a million years I'd be laying eyes on tonight.

A whole fucking *man* had entered this room. He'd entered the room just as I'd looked up and I watched the way he sauntered in like a boss. He was dressed in dark gray pants with a silver Ferragamo belt, a black button up shirt and black dress shoes. Dark clothing was honestly all I'd ever seen him in and God did I feel blessed seeing the way he rocked dark colors. Only he could do dark colors justice and against his brown skin, they were perfection personified.

I'm dreaming right? I'm definitely having one realistic ass dream that I need to wake up from right the fuck now!

I was sure that I had to be dreaming because there was no way in hell that Genesis had walked into this establishment, looking fine as hell I might add, and being greeted by all the staff walking about including some of the seated customers. He would greet them all back with a respectful nod, a gleaming smile, and a few words. All I could do was watch him, feeling

drawn to his boss like aura but also still struck with disbelief that he was here.

I'm dreaming. I have to be.

There was no way that Genesis, the man I'd met two days ago, the man I'd tried my hardest to stop thinking about was walking around like he owned the place and now looking…. Right. At. Me.

Shit.

Those soulful eyes met mine and I was suddenly reminded of just how powerful his stare was. Even with him on the other side of the room, I could still feel myself melting under his gaze.

He looked just as surprised as I currently felt inside but as quickly as that surprise showed on his handsome face, so did a smile. One very sexy smile that I was able to get a closer look at as he made his way past tables to where I sat. I swore it was the best gift I'd received all year. Not even the birthday gifts I'd received a few months ago could top his smile.

"If I didn't know any better I'd say you were stalking me, Jordana."

That smooth baritone of his caused a tingle to rush right through me, all the way down to the most treasured spot between my thighs and I was astounded at how easily my body was betraying me right now.

"I'm pretty sure you're the one stalking me."

His smile intensified and so did the tingle that was flowing through me.

"So, explain yourself, Sir," I demanded in a playful tone. "Why are you stalking me?"

He arrived a short distance away from my table and my heart skittered at our new proximity to one another. One of God's greatest creations stood right in front of me and I felt like the lucky one that had been graced with the gift of sight so I could take him all in.

"I came down here to check that my staff were doing their jobs properly and to say hello to my brand ambassador who isn't even here yet."

I watched the way his eyes glanced to the left where the empty booth next to me was.

"Your staff?"

"Yeah," he confirmed. "I own the place."

Of course, he does.

"Interesting," I replied, breaking eye contact with him to look down at my phone that hadn't lit up. I just needed to look at something other than

him because looking up at him was starting to become too much for me to bare.

“So now you know my reason for stalking you, I think it’s only right that I know your reason for stalking me.”

My gaze lifted to his face and once again that tingle came crashing through me.

“I’m waiting on your brand ambassador.”

His eyes widened. “You’re here with Charlie?”

I nodded. “She’s my cousin.”

“Wow, what a small world,” he stated.

Too fucking small.

I had no idea that Genesis owned GW Eleven and now that I knew, me being surprised was an understatement. Of all the restaurants for him to own in the city, it had to be the one that I was visiting tonight. Fate was surely having a field day bringing us back together because I’d told myself that laying eyes on him again after Wednesday was probably never going to happen and here it was, happening. Without even trying I’d manifested us meeting again and the fact that he knew my cousin, Charlie, was proof enough that I’d been dead wrong about not laying eyes on him again.

You know damn well you wanted to see his fine ass again.

Okay maybe I did want to see him again but I would never admit it.

A brief moment of silence formed between us and our eyes remained sealed on one another. The more I looked at him, the more I realized one thing:

I am dangerously attracted to this man.

My brain knew it, my heart knew it and the treasure that lived between my thighs certainly knew it too because the reaction she was having as I took more of him in… my panties didn’t stand a chance against her.

“I see your glass is almost empty. Someone’s come round to get you another one, right?”

“Yeah someone came but I’m good on having another drink.”

His left brow arched. “Why?”

“I’m not trying to get tipsy right now,” I admitted. “I’m all alone and would rather wait for Charlie to get here.”

He didn’t say anything but a smirk curled his plump lips and I was quick to ask, “What’s so funny?”

“You,” he said. “You’re the one talking about not wanting to get tipsy without your cousin. All you’ve had is one little ass cocktail, not even a real drink. Sounds like someone’s a light weight.”

I scoffed. “I’m not a lightweight. I definitely know how to drink.”

“Is that a fact or something you tell yourself to sleep well at night?”

“It’s a fact,” I declared with my head held high.

“I’ll believe it when I see it.”

“Tell me what you want me to drink tonight and I’ll drink it.”

I don’t know why I felt the need to prove myself to him all of a sudden but I just did and I wasn’t about to let him think that I couldn’t handle my liquor.

My announcement clearly caught him off guard because rather than giving me a swift reply, he studied me carefully with a hungry look. A hungry look that made a surge of electricity charge through my veins.

Rather than responding to my request, Genesis looked over his shoulder and it wasn’t until a nearby waiter caught his eye that he turned back to face me. He remained silent while holding me hostage with his gaze and it wasn’t long ‘til a caramel skinned man arrived at my table.

“Yes, Sir?”

“A bottle of Masseto for the pretty woman,” he told the waiter without breaking eye contact from me.

“Sure thing, Sir.”

The waiter started to walk away but before he could get far, his boss spoke up again.

“And Austin?”

Austin stopped walking and turned to look at Genesis but Genesis was still focused on looking at me.

“Yes, Sir?”

“Don’t include it on her tab. I’ve got it covered.”

Austin nodded and was quick on his heels to carry out Genesis’s order.

“Genesis, I can pay for the bottle.”

“I see someone still isn’t the greatest listener. You forget what I told you about me taking care of you?”

I definitely hadn’t forgotten all the words he’d said just days ago, the way he’d made me feel and most importantly the way he’d looked at me. The way he was looking at me now would remain ingrained in my memory for days to come, that I was certain of.

“No, I didn’t forget but trust me when I say you don’t need to take care of me. I can take care of myself.”

“No one said you can’t take care of yourself, beautiful, but when it comes to me taking care of you, I’m doing that shit regardless. You’re absolutely right when you say I don’t need to take care of you but I want to. When you’re around me, I don’t want you paying for a damn thing.”

“But why not? You don’t even know me, Genesis.”

“The fuck that got to do with me wanting to treat you right?” He asked and his brash tone should have irritated me but tell me why the flood gates between my thighs got worse than they already were. “Besides, I want to get to know you, Jordana. Every part of you.”

I found myself tongue tied by what he’d said and rather than giving me a chance to gather my thoughts so I could respond, he continued talking like he hadn’t just said what he’d said.

“Now the bottle that’s on the way is just for you and I don’t want you leaving here until you’ve drank every single drop.”

It was like his words had suddenly made me forget my ability to breathe because air fled from my lungs and made no attempt to return.

Get a hold of yourself, girl.

My breath that had died inside me I quickly resurrected by taking in air, bringing my breathing back to normality. But nothing about the way I felt as I observed this stranger was normal. The heat growing in my chest wasn’t normal and the desire that washed through me the more I looked at him, definitely wasn’t normal.

“But what if Charlie wants some?”

“Tell her I said she needs to order her own. That bottle is for you alone and I want to know what you think about it when you’re done drinking it.”

I nodded, knowing deep down inside that protesting was pointless. He’d made it clear that the bottle was mine alone and I felt obliged to carry out his wish.

Genesis gave me one last look that made my stomach do a little flip then he left my table.

I reached for my lemon drop and gulped down the remaining liquid, needing to get rid of the sudden dryness in my throat.

Even with him now gone, I couldn’t get that face of his out of my head. That face that looked like it’d been carved by God Himself. Those eyes… those lips… that voice… everything about that man was a turn on and with

the tequila now circulating through my body I knew my attraction to that man would not die down tonight.

But as fine as he was, he was the least of my worries right now. My biggest worry was the lady who'd lied to me about her time of arrival.

I placed my empty glass down and reached for my phone. Just as I unlocked it, Charlie's pretty face appeared on my screen and my ringtone went off. Without hesitating, I hit the green answer button and placed my phone to my left ear.

"Charlie, where the hell are you?"

"J… I'm so sorry, girl… but I'm… I'm not going to make it tonight."

"What?"

I was sure that I'd misheard her because there was no way that she'd just said that she wasn't going to make it tonight.

"You just told me that you were ten minutes away and now you're not coming? What the hell, Charlotte?"

One thing my family were great at doing were calling each other by their government names whenever we were mad at each other. And me calling Charlie by her actual name was all she needed to know about my feelings toward her right now.

"And why do you sound like you're in pain? Are you okay?"

Though I was mad at her, that didn't change the fact that I cared about her dearly and I couldn't ignore the discomfort I recognized in her tone.

"My period, J… it started early."

And just like that, any negative feelings I felt toward Charlie vanished.

"Shit, babe… now I'm the sorry one."

Charlie's periods were always a huge nightmare whenever they started because not only were they extremely painful but they were heavy too. Once hers begun that was her next two days gone because all Charlie would be able to do was sleep the pain away.

As someone who also experienced painful menstruations, I could greatly relate to what she was going through currently. That's exactly why I took a birth control shot every few months to keep mine light and less painful. But Charlie's periods were a different type of pain and though she'd take pain relief, they were no match for the anguish she experienced. She'd been to many doctors and they'd all told her the same thing – she had severe period pain. She hated feeling like a burden so she stopped seeing doctors and decided to live with her symptoms.

“Don’t be,” she said in a low strained tone. “I’m the one who lied about being ten minutes away when I knew fully well I still needed to put on my outfit.”

I tittered, knowing all along she’d lied to me.

“Do you need me to come over?”

“No, I don’t want you worrying about me,” she said. “I’m used to this. Besides, I already feel horrible for standing you up and you wasting your Friday night trying to babysit me would make me feel even worse.”

While I listened to Charlie talk, Austin, the waiter who Genesis had summoned earlier was now back at my table. In his hands was the bottle of Masseto and a wine glass.

“Promise me you’ll stay at GW Eleven tonight, J? I know you’re by yourself but you can order whatever you want and send me your final bill.”

I started shaking my head at Austin when he placed the bottle down to my table.

“I’m leaving, sorry,” I whispered to him while holding my phone away from my ear. “The check please.”

He nodded and took the bottle and glass away.

“I’m going home, girl,” I told Charlie in a normal tone with my phone back on my ear.

“Nooooo, stay, Jordana,” she pleaded. “Get whatever you want! My treat.”

“No can do, cuzo. I’m sure my bed misses me as much as I miss it. Time for me to call it a night.”

“Ugh, fineeeeee,” she groaned. “But I promise to make it up to you real soon.”

“I’m looking forward to it,” I told her. “Now get some rest and I’ll check on you tomorrow morning.”

“I will, J. I’m really sorry once again.”

“Stop apologizing, CC. It’s not your fault.”

She sighed deeply.

“Now get off my line and get some sleep.”

“Yes, mom.”

I giggled and we said our final goodbyes then ended the call. I reached for my YSL chain wallet on the seat space beside me and opened it to pull out my debit card. The moment I looked back up; my heart skipped several

beats at the sight of Austin returning back to my table. Only this time he wasn't alone.

Within seconds they were at my table and I was looking up into those soulful eyes that never failed to pull me in.

"Jordana, what's this I'm hearing about you returning your bottle?"

Shit. This man really has eyes and ears everywhere.

"I'm leaving," I explained. "Charlie can't make it tonight so I'm going home."

"But you haven't eaten or finished your bottle," he stated with a frown. "How you gon' come to my spot and not eat anything?"

"Eating at restaurants alone isn't really my thing," I admitted. "I'd rather go home."

He said nothing but I saw disappointment flash across his face.

"And what if you don't have to eat alone, would you stay?"

Warmth spread across my chest and I wasn't able to stop the smile that grew on my face.

"Is that your cute little way of offering to eat with me?"

A teasing smile creased his face and he said, "Maybe."

"Well, if you're offering to eat with me then sure I'll stay…"

Jordana Evans, who have you become tonight? What happened to never entertaining anything happening with him?

"But I'm not sure how your employees would feel about you abandoning your restaurant just to sit down and eat with me."

"My employees are used to seeing me taking the time out to enjoy my restaurant. I usually eat alone but I want to eat with you tonight."

Something about the way he'd said *'eat with you'* made a shiver go down my spine. If I didn't know any better, I would have thought he'd said, *'eat you'* and just the thought of him doing that made my clit pulsate.

Clearly all I'd said previously about not entertaining anything with Genesis had been nothing but lies. Lies I'd tried to sell myself when I knew deep down inside that they were false. But tonight was simply about us having dinner together. Nothing more. What was the harm in that?

"Okay… that sounds like a plan."

Genesis then turned to Austin and said, "Austin, please take that bottle to room eleven eleven, bring an extra one along with you and be sure to grab Jordana's coat from the coat check."

“You got it, Sir.” Austin left and I gave Genesis a dazed look once he turned to me again.

“Is something wrong?” he asked.

“You told him to take the bottle away… I thought that’s what you wanted me to drink.”

“It is,” he confirmed. “He’s taking it to the room we’ll be dining in.”

“The room?”

“The private dining room.”

My mouth suddenly went moist.

“I don’t want any distractions when we eat together, Jordana. You have my full undivided attention tonight and nothing else matters but you.”

Oh shit... What have I gotten myself into?

“Austin will be back to escort you to the room. Give me five minutes and I’ll be right with you.”

And just like that he was gone, leaving me, and making me realize that I’d just agreed to have a private dinner with a man that knew how to make me wet with just his words.

How was I going to survive this night being all alone with him when I knew how bad I wanted him?

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4
genesis

DANE: *Charlie isn't going to make it tonight, man.*

Dane: *Sorry for any trouble caused.*

It wasn't like Dane to just easily apologize for shit so the fact that he felt the need to apologize on Charlie's behalf was all the proof in the world to me that he really liked that girl.

Don't sweat it, I typed back.

Me: *She good though?*

Dane: *That time of the month.*

Dane: *She'll be alright.*

I sent the okay emoji into our chat then locked my phone and pocketed it. I raised my head and observed my manager, Kross and my inventory team carrying in large delivery boxes from the trucks that were parked outside.

I gave Kross a respectful nod which he returned then I made my way to the exit. I'd been in GW Eleven's storage unit on the first floor and I was now heading upstairs to the second floor where our private dining rooms were.

Five minutes was all I needed to quickly oversee a late-night delivery that GW Eleven had received. Now I was on my way to the one person I wanted to be with all night.

Never in a million years did I think I'd be laying eyes on Jordana at my restaurant tonight. I hadn't even known that Charlie was her cousin. Sure, they shared the same golden beige complexion but they didn't share a strong enough resemblance for me to make the connection. But the connection had been made and I wasn't about to pass up the opportunity to

spend time with the beauty who had been running through my mind ever since we first met.

Moments later, I arrived on the second floor and headed down a long, brightly lit corridor. Along the corridor were the many private rooms GW Eleven had. We had dining rooms for all types of events from birthday parties to business meetings and many more. They came in various types of sizes to cater to the different number of guests that people required for their events. All the rooms had been created and designed to the highest standard possible and I was pleased by the work my interior designers had done. They'd executed all my ideas and brought my vision to life to create an intimate and elegant dining experience.

The room I loved the most was the room I'd created just for couples.

Room eleven eleven.

The room where Jordana currently awaited me.

I'd never had a reason to use the room because I'd created that room for couples only and me not being in a relationship meant that the room was off limits to me. Granted, I could've still used it by myself because I was the owner who could do whatever the fuck he wanted, but I knew it wouldn't feel right. I'd told myself that if I ever used that room I couldn't just dine with anybody. I would have to be with someone special.

Someone like Jordana.

This had to be a sign, right? I'd first met this woman on Wednesday and now we were meeting again two nights later. This definitely had to be a sign and I'd be a fool to not notice the way my body came to attention every time Jordana and I locked eyes. I'd be an even bigger fool to not notice the way she looked at me.

Once outside room eleven eleven's door, I pushed it open and was greeted to the best view of my entire week. The door opening made my best view look at me and when her angelic eyes met mine, my body sizzled. I quickly stepped into the room, eager to kill the distance between us.

Tonight, she'd decided to rock her hair straight and though I absolutely loved the curls on her, straight hair suited her too. She had on makeup but it wasn't the type of makeup that overpowered her face and made her look like a completely different person. I'd first met her without it and even though she was wearing some tonight, she still looked like the same gorgeous goddess that I couldn't take my eyes off.

The emerald green off the shoulder dress she wore was a sight I'd wished I'd seen sooner and honestly; I'd never been jealous of a piece of clothing until now. It was molded to her figure like a second layer of skin and I was envious that the dress got to touch her while I didn't. She'd already found her place at the table and there was nothing better than seeing her sitting pretty and waiting for me. I'd expected her to say something now that I was here but she was silent as a shadow.

"Don't tell me you've gone all shy on me," I announced as I took my seat across from her.

"No," she replied quietly, looking to the side. "I'm just taking this all in… especially that view. My God… it's beautiful."

Nowhere near as beautiful as you, Jordana.

My eyes followed hers and I began to admire the incredible night view that was accompanying us during our meal. I wasn't surprised that she was impressed by the room because I'd been just as impressed when I'd first stepped in here three years ago.

Cream, brown and gold were just some of the colors I loved the most and they'd proven to be a great color scheme for room eleven eleven. A large floor to ceiling window was at the other end of the room, allowing us to see the city, a seating area to the left side of the room with a brown velvet curved sofa and a round, gold coffee table and to the right there was a mounted Basquiat painting and an electric fireplace with built in wet bar cabinets beside the fireplace. There was also a built in speaker system in the walls and ceiling.

"I knew you had a boujee ass restaurant but damn it, I had no idea it was this boujee."

Laughter erupted out of me and I turned to stare at her.

"Boujee?"

She nodded and slowly turned to look at me.

"You have a private dining room for couples only but this looks more like a hotel room," she voiced. "You and your boujee ass restaurant really know how to set the mood… I'm sure you have all the ladies going crazy every time you bring them in here."

I immediately frowned. "And what ladies would that be, Jordana? I told you I usually eat alone."

She remained silent but I noticed the way her eyes sparkled the more she watched me.

“And this is the first time I’ve dined in this room which means the only lady I’ve ever brought in here with me is you.”

The room’s door opened before she had the chance to respond and I turned to see Austin entering. He greeted us both with a friendly smile and once by our table, he asked us what we wanted to order.

She’d had plenty of time to browse the menu while waiting on Charlie so she already knew what she wanted. She ordered wagyu steak for her main dish with chopped salad, French-fried potatoes, lobster mac and cheese and creamed spinach.

Just the thought of seeing her eat all that food was enough to get me excited. I loved that she hadn’t shied away from ordering whatever she wanted. Baby girl was here to eat and from the curves that graced her figure I knew she knew exactly how to enjoy food.

I went with the steak too, mashed potatoes, asparagus, broccoli, and mushrooms.

Austin then left us alone and Jordana reached for her half-filled wine glass. She took a sip before placing her glass back down and sighing gently.

“How are you finding the wine?”

“You don’t need me to answer that.” She smirked. “You know it’s good. That’s why you wanted me drinking it.”

The corners of my mouth lifted and rather than responding, I reached across the table for the unopened Masseto bottle.

“Hold up, I thought we were sharing?”

I unscrewed the bottle’s cap and began to pour myself a glass. I didn’t speak up but I knew the smile on my face would give her the answer to her question.

“Wow… You really are trying to get me drunk tonight.”

I hadn’t been playing when I’d said that I wanted her having a bottle to herself. Hers had already been opened and poured. The bottle I’d just opened was mine alone.

I wasn’t over what she’d said to me downstairs, ordering me to tell her what to drink tonight. Filthy thoughts immediately flew into my head once she’d said it and I started picturing her on her knees, mouth wide open ready to swallow every last drop of my cum.

“I thought you were a heavyweight, Jordana.”

“I am,” she confirmed. “I said you’re *trying* to get me drunk. I didn’t say you’d succeed, Sir.”

My smile intensified. There was just something about the way she called me Sir that I'd grown to love and I'd be the biggest liar if I said hearing her call me Sir didn't make my dick hard.

I lifted my filled glass in her direction. She too reached for her glass and lifted it toward me.

"To Jordana, the heavyweight, having a good time tonight," I announced.

She chuckled and nodded in agreement. "And to Genesis, the boujee restaurant owner, having a good time tonight too."

We toasted then drank and while I sipped, I never once let my eyes stray away from her face.

I don't think I'm ever going to get sick of looking at her.

When we were done drinking, I took the chance to ask Jordana about herself. Within minutes I learned that she was the eldest of four siblings, had been born and raised in Houston her whole life and had always had a love for doing hair but never found the balls to actively pursue it until under a year ago.

"What was holding you back?" I asked.

"Nothing but myself," she admitted. "I was too scared to start and too afraid to fail. But eventually I had enough of letting fear win and just knew I had to believe in myself enough to want to make an impact on women's lives every day. Now here I am, doing what I love full time."

"That's what's up. Doing what you love is what life should always be about."

"And what about you? Are you doing what you love?"

"I am," I replied. "I get to wake up every day knowing that my restaurant is providing a great service to people."

"…But?"

I cocked my head to one side as I watched the way she examined me closely.

"How'd you know there's a but?"

"I can just sense a but coming," she said with a light shrug. "Besides… your answer sounded a little basic."

I grinned. "Basic, huh?"

"Yup."

"Well as basic as it sounds, it's the truth."

She remained silent and took another sip from her glass.

Jordana had been dead right about my answer sounding basic. My answer was basic. Though it was true that I was doing what I loved with GW Eleven, a part of me felt like something… no *someone* was missing.

I didn't want to come off too strong by telling her that which was why I'd dodged her answer about a but coming.

You don't want to come off too strong? Well, it's pretty late for that. You're the one that's making her eat with you alone in your private dining room.

I ignored my thoughts and continued to make conversation with Jordana. I was eager to know more about her which was why I let her do most of the talking while I listened. She had the prettiest voice too. A voice that I didn't want to stop hearing. She told me more about her passion for hair and it wasn't long 'til our food came. Jordana did a happy dance in her seat when the room's door opened and the smell of food filled the room, making me chuckle and grin nonstop. Three of my employees walked in, offering polite greetings and bright smiles to me and Jordana as they placed our various dishes to our table.

One thing I prided myself on owning was a five-star restaurant so I knew that my employees weren't just putting on a good show because I was dining tonight. GW Eleven's customer service was top tier and there wasn't a single living soul who could dispute it.

Once our dishes had been served, the servers left us alone and I asked Jordana if it was okay for me to lead grace. She immediately agreed and when I reached across the table for her hand, she placed it in mine and we both bowed our heads as I said grace. Then we dug into our meal.

Every time she'd take a bite from her food, she'd quietly moan and I wasn't able to control the way I grew down below.

"Someone's enjoying their food I see."

"I'm sorry… this is so damn good."

"Don't apologize, sweetheart," I told her. "I love hearing you happy."

Her cheeks pinked up and she quickly dropped her eyes away from mine.

"And now I don't need to fire any of my chefs for fucking up your meal."

That comment was all it took for her to raise her angelic eyes back on me and a smile spread across her face.

We continued to eat and twenty minutes later, we'd finished our meal. Just like I'd predicted, Jordana had not wasted a single drop of food and I was glad to see elation sink into her face now that she was done feasting.

Seeing that Jordana's glass was empty made me reach for her bottle and refill her glass. Instead of speaking up, Jordana reached for my bottle and decided to refill my glass too. I filled her glass up halfway but she decided to fill my glass all the way to the top and I sent an amused look her way.

"Oh, I see what's going on," I said, letting my eyes caress her breathtaking face. "You're the one trying to get me drunk tonight, Jordana."

"Am I?" She innocently asked, placing the now empty bottle down. "You were so sure about me being a lightweight that I've decided to test the theory about you being the real lightweight here."

I chuckled. "Is that right?"

She nodded.

"Well, it's only right I let you test your little theory," I said, reaching for my filled glass and taking a big sip of the smooth tasting wine.

She reached for her glass and drank while watching me. While we sipped on our wine, Jordana decided to use this moment to compliment my restaurant's food.

"Charlie hadn't been lying after all… the food was amazing. Your chefs really ain't playing no games."

They weren't indeed because I made sure that the meals they produced were nothing but the best. Even the ingredients they used to cook were from the best suppliers in the country.

I thanked Jordana for her compliment and it wasn't long till a comfortable silence formed between us. Well, it started off comfortable but the more we gazed into each other's eyes, the more the tension built between us.

What is it about this woman that I can't fucking shake off?

It wasn't funny the way my body was growing hotter and hotter the more I stared at her. It also wasn't funny how bad I knew I wanted her... how bad I could feel the bulge in my pants expanding the more I remembered her moaning while eating and how bad I wished I could be the reason for her moans.

Moments later, she finished her glass, got up and made her way to the window on the other side of the room.

“This view really is everything,” she announced in a relaxed tone that told me that the wine had her feeling nice.

I finished my glass then got up too and made my way across the room but rather than standing next to her, I decided to stay back and keep a short distance between us.

I didn’t bother denying my eyes the privilege of seeing the way Jordana’s dress hugged her curvy figure and I certainly wasn’t about to deny myself of seeing the way her ass was sitting pretty.

It’s so fat and juicy… I really wanna feel that shit on my face while I’m eating he—

“Don’t you wanna get a closer look at the view, Genesis?” she asked, turning around to face me.

I shook my head as I replied, “I’ve got the best view right now in front of me. That other view ain’t got nothing on you.”

“Look at you… trying to gas me up and shit.” She giggled lightly. “That wine must have you in an extra nice mood.”

Truth be told, the Masseto had definitely worked its way through my system and was currently providing me with a great feeling, but it wasn’t making me say anything that I didn’t already want to say.

“All I’m speaking is the truth.”

She went quiet but took a small step closer to me. “And can you tell me the truth about why you wanted me alone with you?”

I wasn’t about to bother with being timid about my desires for this woman. The energy that had rippled between us all night had been powerful and intoxicating. And quite frankly, I needed more.

Much more.

“I just had to get you away from all those people downstairs… I needed you all to myself, Jordana.”

“And now that you have me?”

I took a step forward as I announced, “I can’t stop thinking about all the ways I want you riding my face.”

She asked for the truth and that’s exactly what I was here to provide… including anything else she wanted from me tonight. And clearly she liked the truth that had slipped from my lips because of the desire now burning in her dark brown eyes. The desire that I’d caught glimpses of all night but now it shone so bright like a fire that had no intentions of going out.

Just when she parted her lips to speak, the door suddenly opened and my body tensed at our new interruption. I reluctantly looked away from Jordana to see our servers from earlier coming in with an empty food cart.

“Thank you all for your hard work tonight,” I told them. “We’ll no longer be needing anything else.”

They nodded and began to collect our empty plates.

I let my gaze land back on Jordana and rather than seeing her pretty face, I was greeted to the back of her head while she looked out the window. If she was trying to hide her emotions from me, it was too fucking late. I’d seen that fire within her and there was no way I was about to let it die.

Once the servers had left, I expected Jordana to turn around and face me again, but she didn’t.

“You’ve definitely gone shy on me, Ms. Heavyweight.”

She slowly turned to look at me and sunk her teeth into her bottom lip as she pressed her back against the window.

“I haven’t,” she whispered. “I’m thinking about what you said, Genesis… and how much I want to ride your face.”

I walked forward and this time I didn’t stop walking until I stood directly in front of her. Despite the heels gracing her feet, she still had to look up at me and with how close I was now, her floral jasmine scent consumed me. Making me want her one hundred times more than I already wanted her.

I dipped my head, bringing our lips in the same breathing space but not actually giving her what I knew we both wanted. I studied her carefully, trying to summon all the willpower I had to keep myself in control. Being a tease was fun and I couldn’t lie, keeping Jordana waiting was a thought that only increased my arousal.

She must have had enough of all the anticipation building between us because seconds later, she leaned in, pressed her lips to mine and a powerful sensation came rushing through me.

She led the kiss and I felt weak in the knees the more she dominated my mouth. I felt her hand on the back of my head, pulling me in closer as she skillfully snaked her tongue through my lips and kissed me like a temptress determined to please.

The more our lips moved, the more my dick hardened and I was convinced I could buss right now in my pants with the way Jordana was

kissing me.

Fuck.

I suddenly pulled back, breaking our kiss, and staring down at her. The hunger in her eyes was unmissable and I'm sure she could see the hunger in mine.

"Who the fuck told you to kiss me like that, Jordana?"

Her lips curled into a devilish smile but I wasn't finding anything amusing about what she'd just done to me. How weak she'd made me feel in just a couple of seconds.

I leaned in close, pushing my chest against hers and feeling her hardened nipples poke into me.

"Who the fuck…" I kissed down her neck, earning a sweet moan from her. "Told you to make me so weak for you?"

I planted kisses along her warm skin and let my hands stroke down her back until I was able to squeeze on her ass cheeks. Just as I'd imagined they were soft as hell and now that I had my hands on them, I never wanted to stop touching them.

"Mmmh, Genesis…"

Hearing her moan my name was enough to send me into a frenzy and my kisses turned into licks, sucks, and bites on her warm flesh.

"You tryna… make me… go crazy over you?" I asked her between my kisses, still stroking and kneading her butt to my heart's desire.

"Maybe," she teased and I couldn't stop the grin that grew on my lips.

I quickly kissed up her neck until I reached her face. This time I decided to take control and I meshed my lips to hers, eager to get a stronger dose of her. Our lips entwined and I drew my tongue into her mouth, giving her teasing laps before quickly switching it up to deep sweeping strokes.

"Gen… Genesis," she moaned and the bulge in my pants strained so bad that it hurt.

I continued to take possession of her mouth, giving her butt a couple more strokes and squeezes. Then I spanked her twice, causing her to whimper.

I broke away from her and dropped down to my knees. I pushed her back so that she was leaning against the window. Then I latched my hands onto the back of her thighs as I thought about how bad I'd been waiting for this moment.

From the very first second I'd laid eyes on this woman, I knew I was attracted to her but most of all I knew I wanted her. Finally, I was being blessed with the chance to have her.

"Tell me how you want me to eat your pussy."

Lust sparkled in her eyes but she didn't respond right away.

"Tell me, Jordana," I demanded. "Fast or slow? From the front or from the back?" I pressed my lips to her inner thighs and kissed on her warm skin. "Whatever you want you're gonna get. Slut me out any way you like, sweetheart, I'm here to give you any and everything you need tonight."

Men could be sluts too and I was willing to be the biggest one for Jordana.

She released a strained breath then replied, "I-I want all of that."

Shit, she didn't have to tell me twice.

Within seconds, I lifted Jordana's dress higher up her thighs until her red lace panties revealed themselves to me. I slowly pulled them down her legs, marveling at the sight of her wetness that had soaked the lace and was still leaking out of her. Seeing her glistening pussy was an even better sight. It was so pretty, pink and all mine.

"Look at how fucking wet you are," I said, letting her panties drop to her ankles and raising each of her legs to remove her panties from her body. "I need you to wet my face up just as good, a'ight?"

"I will," she promised.

I threw her panties to the floor and spread her thighs wide before lifting each one over my shoulders and kissed on her inner thighs again.

Each time I kissed her I inched closer toward her pussy but still kept my distance, wanting to tease Jordana. Her eyes glowed hot with lust and her breaths were coming out heavy and unsteady. But the more I teased Jordana, the more I was only teasing myself and feeling my pre-cum leak in my boxers was enough to make me stop playing.

I made my way forward until my mouth was able to latch onto her pussy. My tongue gently massaged her warm folds, gliding from left to right then slipped inside her tightness. My thrusts were slow but they were more than enough to make Jordana's deep sighs fill the room. I dipped in and out of her and her hands quickly found their way to the back of my head.

I slipped out my tongue only to swipe it across her clit which made her gasp. Once again, I swiped my tongue across her clit, pressing her thighs

closer against my face as I watched the pleasure sweeping across her face.

"Genesisssss," she hissed my name, throwing her head back against the window as my tongue flicked nonstop against her bundle of nerves.

My speed was slow but clearly driving her crazy and I'd only just begun. I left her clit, dropping down to her hole once again and fucked her with my tongue. I lifted a finger to her clit, stroking it while I sank my tongue deeper and deeper inside her.

"Shittt… Genesis!"

"Mmmh," I groaned between my motions and dipped out of her briefly to say, "You really do taste as good as you look, Jordana."

Then I was back on task, providing her with tongue thrusts which made her cry out my name louder and louder.

She tasted even better than I'd imagined and the more I devoured her, the more I realized that I wouldn't be content with tasting her for only one night.

Hell no. She's my new favorite flavor and I'm gonna need her every week. Every single day if I can.

She started grinding on my face and pushing my head lower between her thighs, turning me on in the worst way.

I slid my hands up her thighs until they cupped her ass, pushing her pussy even closer against my face. Being able to breathe wasn't even important to me right now. All I wanted was Jordana cuming all over my face. My thrusts quickened and Jordana's thighs wouldn't stop shaking.

From the way her eyes wouldn't stop rolling back I knew she was close and within minutes her first orgasm came bursting through and her moans were deafening. Even I couldn't keep my mouth shut, groaning as I smothered my face deeper into her warmth, loving everything about how soaked my face was.

I gave her a few seconds to recover before lifting my face from her heavenly center. I removed her thighs from my shoulders, standing up as I pulled her by the hand and quickly led her to the couch nearby.

"Ahhh, G-Gen… Genesis!"

Minutes later, Jordana was on her front with her ass up while I ate her pussy from the back. She was laying over the couch's arm rest while I was positioned behind her, on my knees in between her legs. I noticed she had a wave symbol tattoo on the back of her left thigh and I can't even lie, it was

turning me the hell on that I was seeing and having access to private parts of her body.

“Please… Please don’t stop!”

Believe me, darling, I have no intention of ever doing that.

I increased the pressure of my tongue lapping against her wet folds and moved up and down in a steady speed. I let my thumb gently caress her asshole and it wasn’t long ‘til her ass was grinding against my face. The faster she moved, the quicker my tongue lashed against her wet passage and her cries were endless.

Her second orgasm came bursting through but I still had another goal in mind for Jordana. She started slowing down on grinding her ass on my face and her breaths were now tiny pants.

I made an o shape with my lips and gently sucked on her clit before easing two fingers into her tightness. I curved my fingers and lightly pressed against the sensitive spot that I could feel against her inner walls.

“Ughhh, Genesis!”

A gush of liquid came pouring out of her and I kept my face in place near her pussy so all her juices came raining down on me.

“Genesisssahhhhh!”

“That’s right… fucking squirt all over my face.”

I now knew for sure that my new favorite pastime was Jordana squirting all over my face. I couldn’t stop smiling as my face got more and more soaked with her nectar.

After she came down from her third orgasm of the night, I planted a kiss to the tattoo on the back of her thigh, released my fingers from her slippery core and she collapsed on the couch.

“You’ve… You’ve killed me,” she announced in a tired tone.

I chuckled, shaking my head, and getting up from my knees. I walked to the center of the couch, watching her lay on her stomach with her face pressed down into the velvet.

I knew that I was going to need to get this sofa replaced. There was no way in hell that anyone would use the seat that Jordana’s juices were now all over.

Shit I might even keep it and move it to the crib as a constant reminder of how gushy her pretty pussy gets for me

“It’s not funny, Genesis… you have.”

“You sound and look perfectly alive to me.”

She slowly turned to the side and looked up at me. “You’re a demon… a nasty demon who made me squirt all over his face. Genesis, your face is soaked.”

“As it should be,” I replied, running a hand down my wet face before taking a look to see her juices trickling down my fingers.

Without thinking twice about it, I lifted my fingers to my mouth and sucked on them. I grinned at the way her eyes widened and I slipped my fingers out my mouth.

“You were the one that agreed to riding my face,” I said, dropping down in front of her. “I was just making sure I took care of you which I still intend to do for the rest of the night.”

There was something so sexy about the way her desire for me shone brightly in her dark brown pools. Even after all the orgasms she’d already had, she still wanted more and I was more than happy to provide.

I leaned in closer to her face, watching her as she watched me. I pressed my lips to her neck, inhaling her sweet vanilla scent and slowly ran my lips down her neck as I lifted a hand to her back.

“I need you in my bed tonight, Jordana,” I whispered.

I heard her inhale deeply when I slid my hand down the curve of her back. When I reached her ass, I gently caressed it before squeezing it tight and she released a quiet yet delicate moan.

“And I need to see you squirting all over my dick.”

I pulled up from her neck, locking my eyes on hers. She said nothing in return but she didn’t have to. I could see the look on her face telling me how turned on she was.

My shirt was suddenly pulled and my lips pressed to Jordana’s soft ones. The kiss was sweet yet nasty because Jordana started sucking on my tongue, making me visualize her sucking on my dick. Seconds later, I pulled away and sighed deeply.

“Grab your coat and purse,” I ordered. “We’re leaving.”

“Yes, Sir,” she said with a smirk.

While Jordana got up from the couch and sorted herself out, I pulled out my phone to hit up my driver. I’d driven to GW Eleven today with no idea that I’d be drinking or be this fucking hard and desperate to bury myself inside Jordana. Driving was not possible and honestly I didn’t want my hands on a damn steering wheel tonight. I wanted them touching on nobody but Jordana.

Luckily, my driver, Eddie, who was in charge of overseeing the restaurant's security, was on call whenever I needed him. After shooting him a text, his response came in seconds later and Jordana and I made our way downstairs, hand in hand, and went out GW Eleven's backdoor exit where my employee parking lot was.

Since I'd drove today, I had the key to my Range Rover and Eddie was on his way down from his office. I opened the back door for Jordana, watched her get in before I made my way to my side.

As soon as I was sitting next to her, her lips were on mine and her hand stroked my bulge through my pants. Clearly she wanted me just as bad I wanted her and she could feel plenty of the want I had for her the more she stroked me. My hands found their way to her breasts which I began to massage through her dress and it wasn't long till one of my hands traveled down to the center of her thick thighs.

When the driver's door opened moments later, we pulled away from each other like super charged magnets that had suddenly repelled.

"Good evening, boss," Eddie greeted me and I nodded at his reflection in the rear-view mirror. "Evening, ma'am."

"Good evening," Jordana voiced in a tone so low it was almost a whisper.

I handed Eddie the car key and he wasted no time in starting the car.

Jordana turned away from me to look out the tinted window next to her but I reached for her soft hand and pulled it onto my lap. She slowly turned to face me and let me guide her hand back on my erection. Then she was rubbing on it again while holding me hostage with her eyes and all I could think about was the fact I really needed to be inside this beauty.

Right fucking now.

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5
jordana

CLEARLY I'D BEEN the biggest fool thinking that I could survive this night without having the chance to touch all up on this fine specimen of a man. However, I was done fooling myself. During the car ride to his home, he couldn't keep his hands off me. I wasn't complaining though because the same way he couldn't keep his hands off me, I couldn't keep mine off him.

The thought of him having his way with me in the backseat of his Range Rover while his driver drove us, crossed my mind many times and made my wetness leak out of me faster with each passing moment. All I wanted was him and I'd never needed a car to arrive at its final destination as bad as I needed this one to.

I couldn't stop thinking about what he'd done to me at his restaurant. The way he'd devoured me against the window, how he'd eaten my pussy from the back and I still couldn't get over the fact that he'd made me squirt all over his face. I'd never in my twenty-seven years of life had a man make me squirt. Making myself squirt had never been an issue for me because I'd taken the time over the years to learn my body and my g-spot very well. But Genesis didn't know me from Adam and he'd managed to make me squirt from the very first time he got on his knees to taste me.

"Genesis!" I laughed as he quickly pulled me along behind him. "You ain't even tryna offer me anything to drink… that's not very nice, Sir."

We were now in the warmth of his home and as soon as I'd stepped into the front foyer, Genesis grabbed my purse and removed my coat from my body, hung them on the nearby rack and grabbed my hand to whisk me away upstairs. He had LED sensor lights by his stairs which illuminated our surroundings as we took each step.

“You’re thirsty?” he asked when we were halfway up.

“I might be,” I replied, knowing deep down I was only teasing by commenting on him not offering me anything to drink.

“Well, I’m sure I can find plenty of ways to keep your thirst quenched tonight.”

I bit my bottom lip, feeling the wave of my desire for this man strengthen. I decided to keep silent while he led me upstairs. There was nothing more that I needed to say. I was too desperate for this king to be inside me.

We arrived on his landing and with one swift motion, I was pushed to the nearest wall. Genesis’s lips came crashing onto mine.

“Mmmh… Gen… Gene… Genesis,” I moaned while we kissed.

His large hands went straight to my waist then down my back until they reached my ass. He stroked on my butt while he worked his magic with his lips, making every part of me crave him in the worst way. That spicy scented cologne of his that I couldn’t get enough of filled my nostrils and a shiver ran down my spine, heading straight to my pussy.

“Genesis… oh.”

My eyes grew large as he pressed himself into me, allowing me to feel the big bulge in the center of his pants. His soft lips left mine and he stared down at me. The look that crossed his face was a mixture of irritation and need.

“This is your fault,” he growled, cupping my pussy from the back and a moan slipped from my lips because of his sudden grip on the spot that was throbbing for him the most.

“All that stroking on my dick you were doing in the car…” His other hand he lifted to my dress’s left sleeve, pulling it down my arm until my breasts popped out. “All I wanted to do was fuck you in the backseat during the car ride… it’s your fault I’m so fucking hard right now, Jordana.”

He yanked my strapless bra out the way, gripped my left boob and captured it with his mouth. I lifted my hand to the back of his head and caressed his low cut hair. A thrill thrummed through my veins as he licked my nipple, rolling it with his tongue before sucking on it vigorously while his hand rubbed on my wet middle down below.

“Your… fault,” he whispered between his licks and sucks.

I sighed happily, throwing my head back against the wall as Genesis sucked my nipple and stroked my pussy through my dress.

“Ahhh!”

A sudden sharp pain shot through my nipple and I looked down to see a smirk forming on his handsome face as he lashed the tip of my bitten nipple with his tongue then sucked it once again.

“No one told you to look away,” he said after popping his lips from my nipple. “You ain’t allowed to miss seeing me suck on these pretty titties of yours.” He moved on to my other breast, capturing it in his mouth at the same time that he continued to massage my pussy with his palm.

It’d been dumb as hell for me to look away from him getting a taste of my boobs. How could I miss this sight? He looked too sexy sucking them, squeezing them and occasionally biting them. And with the way his hand refused to let up on rubbing on my second set of lips, my lust for Genesis was officially becoming too much to bare. He was such a fucking tease. Nothing could stop my moans and no one could stop me from reaching for his belt… well nobody except him.

The minute I felt his hands grip mine, stopping me from getting to his belt, my heart sunk. But when his lips popped off my breasts and he quickly led me away from the wall he’d pushed me against, I knew that he was finally going to stop being a tease and bless me with the part of him I was starving for.

Time seemed to suddenly speed up ten times faster than normal because one minute I was watching the back of Genesis’s head as he led us across the landing to his bedroom and the next minute I was placed onto the edge of his king-sized bed with his body over mine as he hurriedly pulled my dress down my frame. I didn’t even get the chance to admire his bedroom but admiring the space around us was the last thing on my list of priorities right now. All I wanted to admire was the hard part of him that lived between his thighs.

He’d already turned on the lights as we’d entered his bedroom and dimmed them, adding to the sensual mood, and allowing me to get a great view of him towering over me. The sight of him fully dressed and looking down at my naked body like it was the best thing he’d ever laid eyes on, set a fire inside me so powerful that it almost brought water to my eyes.

“Look at you,” he said as he slid his dark eyes up and down my body. “You’re perfect.”

I felt the heat of a blush on my cheeks and a smile parted my lips. I had some insecurities about my body – I mean what woman didn’t – but hearing

Genesis compliment mine was enough to make me dash all those insignificant insecurities out my mental for the night.

I lifted my back from the bed and reached for the top button of his black shirt to unbutton it before I quickly unbuttoned the rest. Once his shirt was open, he took it off and revealed his muscular chest. It was one hundred times better than I'd imagined. He had tightly corded muscles, well defined abs with a deep v line, a shoulder tattoo of beautifully written text and a Roman numeral tattoo on his left pec.

I parted my lips to speak but no words dared to drop from my lips. All I could do was ogle this man who I had no doubt was crafted by God Himself and all the angels in the heavenly realm.

Genesis sent a sexy smile my way before dropping his hands to his belt but I beat him to the punch by reaching forward, unstrapping it for him and pulling his pants and boxers down to his knees. Once his dick was out, I wasted no time grabbing it but before placing it into my mouth, I took the time to take a real good look at it.

Big, thick, and long. Just the way I like it.

"Hello," I said, giving it one slow stroke and pre-cum oozed from its tip. "My name's Jordana. It truly is a pleasure to finally meet you."

A deep chuckle filled the room and I looked up at him with an innocent smile.

"You really just introduced yourself to my dick," he commented, shaking his head as he continued to laugh. "You're hilari… Shitttttt."

Before he had the chance to finish his sentence, I wrapped my lips around his thickness, pushing myself all the way down until my nose touched right on his pelvis.

"What the fuck," he groaned. "Do that shit again."

He was big, almost too big it seemed but I was more than down for the challenge to take him again. I slowly slid my lips up his dick, circling his base with one hand to keep it upright before I engulfed him once again until every inch of him was down my throat.

The joys of having a non-existent gag reflex. I'm glad I get to taste every inch of him tonight.

"Fuuuck… Jordana."

His groans encouraged me to keep moving and I developed a steady rhythm sucking up and down his shaft. I kept a tight grip on his base with

both hands and twisted them repeatedly while my lips massaged his hard length.

Genesis's hands found their way to the back of my head where he started pulling my hair into a ponytail. It was like we'd switched occupations – he was now the qualified hairdresser and I was his very special client, ready and eager to get whatever hairstyle he was willing to give me.

"You look so sexy sucking this dick… yeah that's right, keep going… faster," he encouraged.

My movements quickened and his groans only got louder. I switched between sucking on his length with the double hand twist combo – that could make the strongest of men weak as fuck – swirling my tongue around his hard tip and dropping down to his balls. Sucking each one individually so I could give equal attention to them both.

Eventually my mouth got so soaked with my salvia and his juices that all you could hear were wet squishy sounds and the sounds of the pleasure he felt because of what I was doing to him.

After a few minutes, my hair was yanked up, causing my head to lift from his wet dick. I didn't even have to hear him speak to know what was next. As I licked the traces of his pre-cum from around my mouth, I could see the hunger he had for me in those dangerously attractive eyes of his. Those eyes that made me want to do any and everything he wanted.

He removed his pants and boxers before moving to his nearby bedside table where he pulled out a gold square packet from the top drawer. Once he was strapped up, his lustful gaze locked on me and he inched closer to me until he was towering over me again. It was when he lifted my legs and climbed in the middle of me that I remembered I hadn't removed my Bottegas from my feet.

"G-Genesisssssss!"

And now I wouldn't have the chance to remove them because he raised my thighs to his sides and buried every inch of his thick member inside me.

"How. Fucking. Dare. You?" Between each word that he uttered, he quickly slid out of me only to slide right back in. His hands remained glued to my thighs, keeping them stuck in place on his torso. I didn't want to run but even if I wanted to run to, I couldn't. "Sucking my dick like that… making me weak for you."

I'd underestimated his size. Just because I'd been able to easily take him in my mouth, didn't mean shit to my pussy.

"And now you're choking the hell out of my dick with your wet pussy… God damn it, Dana. You really gon' turn a nigga like me into your own personal slut."

My walls tightened around his hardness and I wasn't able to stop the cries that fell from my lips with each stroke he gave me. Every part of my body was on fire and there was no stopping the ecstasy shattering through me each time he moved in and out of my body. It hurt so good that I was sure this feeling had to be illegal.

"Why the hell do you feel this damn good?" He asked but the way he'd said it sounded like he was asking himself. Besides, I was too caught up with the intensity of him fucking me to respond.

He lowered himself down, pushing his broad chest against my breasts and branded his thick lips to mine. The kiss started off slow and seductive but quickly turned into sloppy and nasty, mirroring his slippery thrusts inside my pussy.

His dick kept slipping out of my entrance a couple times, annoying the hell out of me but Genesis the pro broke our kiss and lifted my thighs off his sides. He raised them higher, bending them all the way back so my knees were now positioned near my face and delivered restless pumps to my wet passage.

"Aaahhhh, G-Ge… G-Genahhhh!"

"You know my fucking name… say it."

He sank himself deep within my tight walls and I was positive that he was stretching me out in ways I didn't know were possible.

"Gene… Genesssss," I hissed, unable to obey his command.

I couldn't speak straight or think straight. The pleasure rushing through me was too damn overwhelming and I had no one to blame but the man currently slipping in and out me like a divine emperor making his presence known in his new kingdom. He was making it clear that my pussy was all his, under his rule and control.

He suddenly put his hands on the insides of my thighs and spread my legs even wider than before. I gasped as his thrusts got deeper, running my hands up his back and clawing into his taut muscles.

"I want to hear you say my name, Jordana," he ordered, his eyes demanding and passionate as he stared down at me. "Tell me who's fucking

you right now.”

“Genesisssss,” I breathlessly made out.

“Tell me who’s made your pussy this fucking wet…”

“Youuuuu,” I cried out, my eyes misting. “You, Genesissssahhh!”

It only took a couple more thrusts to cause a hot searing bolt of pleasure to wash through me. My eyes wouldn’t stop rolling back and I felt Genesis’s thumb rub on my clit.

Not only could I not keep my mouth shut, but I also couldn’t keep still. My whole body shook uncontrollably and I swear I was no longer present. Yeah my body was currently on this bed but my soul had left my body and gone to a completely new planet where Genesis reigned supreme over every part of me.

He buried his bearded face in my neck, brushing kisses across my neck and jaw and slowly pulled out of me. As soon as he did, a gush of liquid came pouring out of me and I suddenly realized why I was feeling like I was on a whole other planet.

Oh my… He made me squirt again!

“Aghhhhh, Gene!” My screams filled the room as my juices came flooding out of me nonstop.

My lips parted wide, taking the shape of a wide o and I was suddenly unable to speak as my convulsions took over my being.

“That’s a good fucking girl,” he whispered against my parted lips. “Squirt all over this dick… uh-huh, just like that.”

I felt light taps against my entrance and I realized he was using the tip of his dick to hit against my pussy while I squirted, only increasing the euphoria I was currently experiencing.

“Keep squirting for me, Dana… I need all that shit wetting my dick up.”

Here I was having an out of body experience, crying out like a damn banshee and he was as calm as ever, kissing all up on me and whispering nasty shit in my ear. Telling me how great my pussy was, how wet I was for him alone and how much he loved me squirting all over his dick. He’d created an entire puddle between my thighs and I could hear sloshy sounds as his taps got faster, sending my mind into complete overdrive.

“Fuck, this pussy is too mothafucking good,” he groaned. “I need more of you, sweetheart.”

After I’d recovered from my orgasm, Genesis dropped my thighs and entered deep inside me again. Even after the overwhelming orgasm I’d just

experienced, I could still feel myself aching for more of him and that scared me.

Why the hell did I still want him so bad even after I'd gotten my nut?

I felt his dick swell after a few more strokes and I knew his own peak was approaching. What he asked next confirmed my thoughts.

"You gon' let me cum on that pretty face of yours, Dana?"

Of course, I agreed. Genesis then pulled out of me and fell on his back. I mounted him, gripped his dick, and took off the condom before slowly stroking him up and down with one hand. My eyes never left his. Within seconds his load came bursting through and I closed my eyes as traces of his cum exploded all over my face. There was so much of him spurting out onto my face and I couldn't lie, I fucking loved it.

I opened my mouth and let out my tongue, wanting to catch some of his juices on my tongue and when I felt some land on it, I smiled to myself before swallowing him.

"Fuuuuuck, Jordana."

There was nothing better than hearing him moan my name.

I decided to take a page out of his book by wiping my face with one hand then bringing it to my lips and sucking his juices off my fingers. His mouth lifted in a seductive smile and I lowered my face toward his once I was done sucking. He grabbed the back of my head, pushing me down so our mouths could join and our tongues collided.

It didn't take long for Genesis to get hard again and we were quickly back at it like two addicts who had gotten a potent dose of a new drug that they couldn't get enough of.

Missionary, doggy style, cowgirl, reverse cowgirl, sixty-nine – we did them all, including two new positions that I hadn't heard of until tonight – the pretzel dip and the spider. Two wild ass positions that made me feel like a novice when it came to sex. Genesis was experienced and it showed by his ability to work my body in the best ways possible.

We explored each other's bodies for hours and hours that even I was scared of how much energy I had to keep going at it with Genesis. I knew from the jump that he had dangerous eyes but now I was positive that everything else about him was dangerous too. Especially that dangerous dick that I couldn't get enough of.

Eventually four a.m. arrived and Genesis knocked out with me in his arms. I almost knocked out too until I remembered that spending the night

couldn’t happen. So as carefully and quietly as I could, I left his arms, got out the bed and placed my dress back on. Putting on my shoes was unnecessary because this nigga had really fucked me all night in my Bottegas.

Still can’t believe his freaky ass did that.

Like a thief in the night, I left his bedroom, grabbed my coat and purse from downstairs. I ordered an Uber and took my ass far away from the number one place I knew I could never return to again.

It was a huge struggle getting out of Genesis’s arms this morning but I did it anyway. His arms were so solid and strong providing me with a comfort that put my soul at ease. He had me locked in with his chest pressed against my back, one arm over my breasts and the other pinned under my left waist. It’d been a miracle that I’d been able to get out of his arms without waking him up.

My pussy really knocked his ass out cold like a bottle of NyQuil.

I fought against the smile tugging on the corners of my lips.

“What’s got my baby girl smiling so hard today?”

But my fighting had been pointless and I looked up from the half-chopped strawberry below me to stare into the jewel-like amber eyes belonging to no one other than my heart in the physical form – *Numa Evans*
.

Fifty-two years old never looked better. My mother was a baddie and there wasn’t a single soul who didn’t know it. She was almost as tall as me, just a couple inches shorter, had a delicate, warm beige face with bright amber eyes, high cheekbones, and full lips. The thick healthy curls that naturally grew from my scalp were thanks to her and her curls currently flowed beautifully down her back.

My mother was my entire world and the number one woman I’d always been able to rely on. I was truly blessed to have a mother as great as her by my side. She’d worked her ass off as a single mother and I knew there was no way I would ever be able to repay her for all that she’d done for my brothers and I, but I’d sure try my hardest to.

We were currently in her open plan kitchen, preparing our lunch for the day – stuffed chicken, cheddar garlic biscuits and green beans. I was also making my famous homemade strawberry lemonade which my family couldn't get enough of. While I prepared the strawberries, my mother was making the mixture for the chicken's stuffing. She'd started grating cheese but my smile had distracted her.

"Oh nothing," I quietly said, dropping my eyes back to the chopping board below me.

"That smile of yours sure don't look like nothing… something's different about you, baby."

I focused on chopping the rest of the strawberry I held against the chopping board.

"Someone got some last night didn't she?"

Oh my God… Is it that obvious?

"Momma," I groaned, feeling the heat of shame stain my cheeks.

She laughed. "Oh, someone definitely got some last night! Look at those cheeks getting red as a tomato."

Times like these I hated that my light skin always gave me away whenever I was blushing.

My eyes met my mother's once again and the delight sparkling in her eyes was unmissable.

"And you've not stopped humming that song by that girl… what was her name again…" She paused, a contemplative look forming on her face. "Mani long," she proudly stated like she'd just figured out the best thing in the world.

I stifled a chuckle at her incorrect saying of *Muni Long* but decided not to correct her. I didn't want to confirm her comment about me humming Muni Long's *Hrs and Hrs* because that would be me admitting that I indeed got some last night. But my silence was useless against Numa Evans. She knew her offspring like the back of her hand which meant she knew what I'd been up to last night without me even having to admit it.

"So, when should I clear out my schedule to meet the man who now has my daughter sprung?"

"There is no man," I announced, causing a frown to crease my mother's face.

"You sure about that because the smile you tried to hide away from me just minutes ago tells me something different?"

I sighed, knowing that there was no point in hiding the truth away from my mom. Yes, my mother was fully aware of the fact that I had sex but did I love that she was aware? Not exactly but it wasn't something to hate either.

The relationship I had with my mother was like an open book and I truly appreciated the comfortable space she'd cultivated for me over the years. I could talk to her about any and everything, knowing that with her, there was no judgement, no condemnation, just the love of a mother ready to listen to her child.

Despite how close we were, talking about sex with my mother was something I tended to shy away from. She encouraged it though and occasionally I'd reveal a few details that I felt comfortable enough to share.

"Yes, I was with someone last night," I admitted, averting my gaze from hers and pushing the strawberry I'd chopped last to the side before reaching for a fresh one. "But it wasn't anything serious… just some fun."

"Just some fun has you smiling like you won the lottery?"

"Momma," I groaned her name once again.

She let out a light chuckle. "Okay, baby, whatever you say."

A brief moment of silence formed as I chopped another strawberry.

"You use protection, young lady?"

I cringed at the sudden authoritative tone my mom had adopted. She couldn't help it though. The mother in her could never die no matter how hard she tried to be cool and hip.

"Yes, momma."

"And you've booked your next test appo—"

"Yes, yes, yes," I cut her off.

"Okay, okay, just making sure," she simply said while continuing to grate a cheese block.

"That your daughter isn't a total Jezebel," I commented. "Yeah I know."

"No, I was just making sure that my independent and liberated daughter who is free to be the sexual being that she desires, is keeping herself safe," she replied as she reached for the last block of cheese on her board. "Can't be getting your back blown and not stay safe."

She shot me a wink and I wasn't able to stop the laughter that poured out of me. I'd never heard her use the term *"getting your back blown"* before and hearing her say it now was hilarious to me. She'd clearly been listening to way too much Megan Thee Stallion which wasn't a surprise

because Megan was the H town hottie and my mom loved hearing a female rapper talk her shit.

My laughter caused my mom to laugh too and we were both laughing away like two homegirls that couldn't get enough of a silly joke.

"What's up with all this laughing?"

My mom and I looked in the direction of the deep voice that had sounded and spotted no one other than the man who believed he was in charge of this entire family aka my father number one, walking into the kitchen from the living room.

"Hello to you too, Jasiel," my mother greeted him in a stern tone.

"All I know is that I better have something to eat real soon or ain't nothing gon' be funny," Jaxson aka father number two voiced as he entered in behind Jasiel.

"Y'all were sounding like some damn hyenas. We could hear you laughing all the way from the front yard. The fuck is so funny?"

"Jaiden Philip Evans, I know damn well you ain't cursing in my house."

"My bad, momma," Jaiden aka father number three apologized with a cheeky grin.

The three troublemakers sauntered in the kitchen, heading for our mother first and greeting her with hugs and kisses. Then it was my turn to be graced with their attention.

Jasiel came over to me, wrapped his large arm around my shoulder and kissed my forehead.

"You okay, Peanut?" he asked.

"Yea—Uh-uh!" I suddenly slapped Jaiden's hand away from my chopping board. He was too busy trying to steal a berry to come show me some love. "Don't even think about it. You know how you get once you start munching on the strawberries."

"Man, you's a hater! I just wanted to taste one. Ma, please tell Jordana to let me have one."

"Absolutely not. You'll eat them all before Dana has the chance to even make the strawberry lemonade. Hands off, Jai."

Jaiden's face dulled and I flashed him a devilish smile.

Jasiel left my side and Jaxson came to kiss my cheek but when I noticed his large hand creeping on the edge of the quartz counter seconds into our embrace, I slapped his hand away and pushed him off me.

"Damn it, woman, I'm hungry," he expressed with a groan.

“Ma, Jax said a bad word,” Jaiden sang in a childish tone, grinning from ear to ear.

My mom shot Jaxson a threatening look and he shot his hands up in surrender as he backed away from the kitchen island.

“So why were y’all laughing?” Jasiel asked and I was quick to place my focus back on chopping the last few strawberries.

“Oh, private joke, honey,” Mom answered.

“They were probably laughing about how whack Peanut’s secret date was last night,” Jaiden chimed in and my mouth went dry.

I kept silent with my head down and my knife moving across the board.

“Date?” My mother’s intrigued tone filled the room. “What date?”

“Dana went out last night to one of those boujee ass restaurants downtown,” Jaxson explained.

“With Charlie apparently,” Jasiel added and my eyes slowly lifted to see him standing on the other side of the island, right in front of me. A large grin split his face into two and I just knew he was trying to get under my skin.

“We all know she’s cappin’ though.” Jaiden chuckled. “She must have a new dude she’s too scared to introduce us to.”

I couldn’t resist the urge to roll my eyes. “Like I told the three of you yesterday, I wasn’t on a date. I was meeting up with Charlie bu—”

“And yet you didn’t put her on your IG story like you usually do when y’all go paint the town red,” Jaxson added, making my heart race as I stared at him leaning on the counter behind me.

His nosy ass!

“Well, if you let me finish, *Mr. Nosy,* you would’ve heard me say Charlie couldn’t make it last night.”

A concerned look instantly marred Jaxson’s face. “What? She couldn’t make it?”

“Why not?” Jasiel asked.

“She good?” Jaiden also chimed in.

The same way they were protective over me, they were protective over Charlie too. But of course, since I was their sister I received the brunt of their fatherly nature.

“She’s fine. That time of the month.”

They all gave me nods of understanding.

I'd texted Charlie a few hours ago to check up on her and she sent me a selfie of her in bed, hugging a box of chocolates.

"So, you were at that boujee restaurant all alone?"

"Yup," I told Jasiel, collecting the chopped strawberries, and throwing them into a nearby saucepan.

"That sucks," Jaxson said.

"It wasn't that bad… I still enjoyed the restaurant's food."

And the owner too.

"So, you ate all alone and then went home?" Jasiel asked, suspicion creeping through his baritone.

My heart pounded hard in my chest but I kept a straight face as I stared into Jasiel's dark browns.

"Yes," I lied, picking up the saucepan and heading to the sink.

"So, she wasn't on a date after all," my mother intervened before any one of my fathers could interrogate me further. "Now that the three of you are done being detectives for the day, are you ready to help us cook?"

My brothers suddenly made a beeline for the exit and my mother protested loudly as they raced into the living room. Once they were out the kitchen, I turned to look at her and spotted the knowing smile plastered on her wrinkle free face.

"Thank you," I mouthed and she nodded before ordering me to hurry up with preparing the strawberries so I could help her with seasoning the chicken.

Every Sunday my brothers and I came to visit my mom and eat Sunday supper with her. Sometimes we would do the supper on a Saturday like we were doing today especially if Numa had a busy Sunday like she did tomorrow. She was an elementary school teacher, one of the very best (the best one in my eyes honestly) and she took her job seriously. If she had a lot of work to get done then we would move our Sunday suppers to Saturday, giving her time to prepare for a new school week.

"Aye, Peanut." I looked over my shoulder to see that Jaxson had made his way back into the kitchen moments later. "Make sure you text me the amount you spent last night so I can take care of that."

I nodded, knowing that if I even entertained the thought of protesting his offer, it would be useless. I was more than happy to cover my own bill because I worked hard for my money and depended on nobody but me, myself, and I. I hustled like a man because if I gave a man the power to feed

me, I was ultimately giving him the power to starve me. Something I was never going to be okay with. But as far as my brothers were concerned, I could be on my independent woman shit any other time except when they were around. If they said they were taking care of me, I had no choice but to suck it up and let my three fathers take charge.

I was extremely thankful my mom had managed to get my brothers's attentions away from my "date" last night. The last thing I wanted to do was discuss my night out with them. And I most definitely wasn't about to tell them how the owner of GW Eleven rocked my world last night by making me squirt all over his face and his dick.

After getting home at four-thirty a.m. today, I took a quick shower and went straight back to bed, too tired to stay up further. I'd woken up hours later with sore legs and an even sorer pussy. The evidence of Genesis's power over my body was undeniable. He'd fucked the shit out of me last night and this morning. And as much as I loved every minute of it, I was positive that what we did last night and right up until the early hours of this morning could never happen again.

It was a onetime thing and I wasn't going to indulge in the possibility of anything more happening between us. He'd gotten his nut; I'd gotten mine and now post nut clarity had told me that our one night of pleasure would remain exactly that – *one* night. Not multiple nights. We'd gotten what we both wanted for the night and that was the end of it.

It was just some fun… fun I couldn't stop replaying over and over in my head. I'd already had over five sex flashbacks and this day was nowhere near over.

Get a hold of yourself, Jordana. You got some dick and now you're good. Time to focus on nobody else but you. Forget him.

Listening to the voice in my mind, I shut out all thoughts about Genesis from my head and focused on spending time with my momma.

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6
genesis

IT'D BEEN over twenty-four hours since the night I'd shared with Jordana. I was still salty as hell that she'd given me the best night of my life and dipped out of my crib without even saying goodbye. Without even giving me the privilege to slide between those heavenly thighs one more fucking time!

Yeah I was pissed and rather than being pissed off at the woman who had left me, I was pissed off at myself. Pissed off at myself for letting her slip away from me so easily and pissed off that I'd been hoodwinked by the treasure she carried between her legs. The *powerful* treasure that had knocked me out cold. And most of all, I was pissed the fuck off that Jordana had left me before I had the chance to get her number.

Left me before I had the chance to make that pussy squirt again.

Anger and desire were two emotions that I never experienced at the same time but because of Jordana I was feeling them both right now and that's how I knew I had a big problem on my hands.

I want her again.

And even having her for one more night wouldn't be enough for me.

I want all of her. I want to hear her talk to me all day, I want to see her smile, I want to be the reason for her smile… God damn it, I think I just might need her.

Was I crazy for feeling this way about a woman I'd only known for less than a week? Probably but I didn't care. When a man knows what he wants, he knows and I was positive that Jordana was who I wanted. But I couldn't act like I wasn't thinking about what was going on in that pretty little head of hers. She'd been the one that left me without so much as a goodbye.

Just because you want her doesn't mean she wants you too.

Okay that was true but what about the night we shared? What about the way fate had brought us back together like two final pieces of a puzzle? The way we'd connected mentally, emotionally, and physically.

You did all that connecting and she still left your ass all alone.

A stiffness formed in my jaw telling me that my voice in my head had indeed hit the mark and triggered me.

"Aren't we lucky, Kai? We have our very own maid chefing it up for us."

"Uncle Genie's a maid?"

But even the anger churning in my chest couldn't dare compete with the love I had for the two most important souls in my life.

My eyes lifted from the bacon sizzling on the silver pan below me to look at my sister and nephew who sat around a four-seater dining table a short distance away from where I stood in the kitchen.

"*Our* queen maid," Gabi corrected Kaiser with a toothy smile before allowing her coffee brown eyes to meet mine.

She was the spitting image of our mother. They shared everything – from those big, coffee brown eyes, that blemish free skin, to that five-foot two stature that I teased Gabi about from time to time and even their personality was the same. They were both affectionate, patient, and funny women and the same way my mom had never failed to put a smile on my face, Gabi had that same effect on me.

Gabi's current smile grew bigger and when her eyes dropped down to my chest, I started shaking my head, unable to help the smile tugging on my lips. I took a peek down at my chest too and spotted the words '*Queen Of The Kitchen'* written in elegant white font across the black apron I currently wore.

"Kaiser, I promise you one of these days I'ma have to burn this apron so your momma won't be able to force me to wear it whenever I cook over here," I voiced, putting my focus back on the sizzling bacon and reaching for the tongs I'd set aside.

"And if he burns it we'll simply buy him another one," Gabi replied as I turned over the bacon pieces. "Ain't that right, Kai?"

"Yeah!" Kaiser yelled excitedly, clearly in cahoots with his mother.

I couldn't blame him for wanting to always ride for her because not only was she a great mother to him, but she was also someone you always

wanted to see happy.

From the very first day that I'd found out I was going to be a big brother, I'd made it my number one priority to always be there for my sister. No matter what she needed I was going to make sure she got it.

When it came to her college fund, I footed the remaining bill to make sure she went to one of the best creative writing universities in the country, Brown University. And even after only a month of her being there and deciding it wasn't for her at all, I supported her one hundred percent.

I knew how much of an introvert Gabi had always been and the excessive partying and drinking that uni had to offer would never be for her. I knew that but I still wanted her to experience university life and live outside of her comfort zone. Do something different, experience new shit but all Gabi wanted was to be back in the safe comfort of home. I didn't blame her nor did I force her to do anything she didn't want to do.

Life hadn't always been the kindest to my sister in her teenage years and it definitely hadn't been easy in her mid-twenties either. I wasn't here to add to any of her stress. Only ease it. And I would forever be committed to making sure that she and Kaiser were good. Whatever I had to do for them both I would do and the things I'd done so far I had no regrets about.

Me coming round to hers to cook her and Kaiser meals was nothing new. They loved my cooking and honestly I loved cooking.

It's funny because if I hadn't hired chefs to cook at GW Eleven, I would happily take over as head chef. But since I had the best cooks in the game running shit I was more than happy to leave them in charge of cooking and cook recreationally for the ones that I loved. Cooking was a form of therapy for me and I could never get tired of seeing Gabi and Kai's faces light up whenever I was whipping them up something tasty.

About twenty minutes later, I was done preparing our breakfast for the day – pancakes, eggs, bacon, and sausages.

"This all smells and looks amazing, Gene," Gabi announced as I dropped her and Kaiser's plates right in front of them. "Thank you so much."

"Thank you, Uncle Genie," Kaiser said and my heart warmed at the big smiles on their faces.

Ever since Kaiser had started talking and heard my name, he'd decided to call me Genie which was one hundred percent fine by me. He'd lowkey made my name sound cooler by referring to me as a majestic creature that

could grant wishes. And of course, me being the best uncle in the world meant that I would always grant Kaiser his wishes.

“No worries,” I replied, sauntering back over to the kitchen island to collect my plate. “You know the queen of the kitchen’s got you both.”

Just before I could turn with my plate in hand to see the look on their faces at me calling myself a queen, I heard my phone go off and felt it vibrate in my left pocket. Rather than paying it any mind, I headed to the dining table and joined my family. The second I started saying grace, my phone went off again and I knew that ignoring it was no longer an option.

My phone was currently on do not disturb, a feature I always put on whenever I was with my family or whenever I just wanted to be left the hell alone. But I did have an expectation for certain notifications to slip past my phone’s solid feature.

While Gabrielle and Kaiser feasted on my cooking, I excused myself and headed down the walkway leading to the front foyer where I pulled out my phone.

Seeing a notification from *Ring* telling me, **‘Someone is at your home,’** made me frown.

I unlocked my phone and went straight to the app only for a sigh to leave my lips at the man now standing outside my door. I reluctantly pressed the green accept button.

“Unc, I’m not home right now,” I told him, watching the way his eyes widened at the sudden sound of my voice.

“What do you mean you’re not home?” His surprised look quickly transitioned to an irritated one. “How can I hear your voice if you ain’t at home right now? Quit playing, nephew, and come let me in.”

“Unc, I’m not playing with you. I’m really not in.”

“So how the hell am I talking to you now then?” He gruffly queried.

“You see that doorbell you just pressed?”

I observed as his eyes landed on the doorbell and he squinted.

“It’s got a camera and a mic. That’s how I’m able to see you and talk to you.”

He examined the Ring doorbell for a few more seconds before nodding.

“So, you can see me right this second?”

“Yes, Sir,” I replied coolly.

“Good,” he said before lifting a hand and extending his middle finger.

I almost wanted to laugh but I knew laughing would only piss him off further.

“This is for you thinking you can ignore your uncle like I’m one of your lil’ waiters at your lil’ restaurant.”

His reference to my restaurant being little struck a nerve but I let it slide.

“And this—” He lifted his other hand and extended another middle finger so that both of his middle fingers were facing me. “This is for not being home on the one day I decide to pay your ass a visit, youngin’.”

I stared carefully at his face, seeing the seriousness cradled in his eyes while he held up two middle fingers at me. The seriousness that did nothing to faze me because as quickly as it formed in his eyes, it vanished and all that was left on his face was a wide grin.

“Are you done playing games, old man?”

“Who are you calling old?” He dropped his hands and buried them into the pockets of his pants. “You know I could go toe to toe with your ass any day now.”

“I’m sure,” I replied, knowing fully well I could lay his ass out with one simple punch to his face. “My bad for not being home today, Unc, but I’ll chop it up with you some other time. I gotta go—”

“Uh-uh,” he cut me off, firmly shaking his head. “You’ll be at your lil’ restaurant tomorrow, right? I’ll stop by tomorrow.”

A weight settled on my chest.

“You and I need to talk, Genesis. You know we do.”

And that’s the last thing I wanna do. That’s why I’ve been avoiding you, old man.

“Alright,” I reluctantly agreed. “Stop by the restaurant tomorrow anytime from twelve and we’ll talk.”

He nodded. “See you tomorrow, nephew. And don’t you go missing on me again, you know I’ll always find you.”

After he’d said his goodbye, I watched him walk away from my door and all I could think about was how I really wasn’t trying to have this “talk” with my uncle. I already knew what it was about and I really wasn’t in the mood to hear it. But I had no choice but to sit down and listen to my uncle talk to me about some shit I vowed to never get involved in again.

Monday morning arrived and I was up early, ready to get this day over and done with. I was driving on the roads way before the morning rush hour started and the entire time I put my pedal to the metal, silence pervaded the car space around me.

The last thing I needed this morning was music. I had way too many thoughts circulating around in my head and music would not help. Not even a symphony playing in the background could orchestrate the disorganized thoughts floating in my mind.

From thoughts about my uncle, my business and of course Jordana, it was all too much to be thinking about early in the morning. Thinking about my business was nothing new because I was always thinking about GW Eleven. That was my pride and joy, how could I not think about it? I would forever be thinking about ways to improve and elevate my empire.

Now thinking about Jordana? That was definitely new. I didn't mind thinking about Jordana but I didn't want to think about her and my uncle at the same time. She was special and deserved to have all my attention whereas my uncle was someone who I wasn't trying to give all my attention to. Nonetheless, this sit down with my uncle wasn't something I could avoid anymore. No matter how hard I tried to.

Once at GW Eleven, I went straight to my office, looked over a few emails and documents for a few hours and when the clock struck twelve, my phone that was faced down on my desk started ringing.

"Unc, you here?"

I answered his call on the second ring and once he told me he was here, I headed downstairs to meet the man that I somewhat considered to be father figure.

I didn't have to be told where my uncle was but Kross being the efficient manager that he was, told me anyway when we crossed paths in the corridor leading toward the main restaurant.

"Your uncle's here, Boss. At the bar room."

I nodded at him with approval. "Got it. Appreciate you looking out."

He nodded too and we went our separate ways. Once I arrived at the bar, a suited man had his back facing me while he rattled off his drink order to Cami, one of my bartenders.

"I'm afraid I'm a little too young for you, Sir."

Well, I was under the impression that he was giving her his order but as I got closer to the bar, I noticed the amusement pouring from Cami's arctic

blue eyes.

“Age ain’t nothing but a number, Princess. I’m sure you and I have plenty in commo—”

“Leave the woman alone, old man. You know you can’t do nothing for her.”

Upon hearing my voice, he turned around and sent a glare my way.

I smirked and looked over at Cami who still looked like she wanted to laugh.

“Appreciate you, Cami. Go ahead and take a quick break before your shift starts.”

There was an hour before opening time and my staff were all in their various designated spots, ready for whatever customers this new day brought our way. Usually, the bar stayed quiet until the late afternoon which was why Cami was working the bar by herself.

“You got it, boss,” she replied with a gentle nod before walking off.

“No, Cami, stay, baby. Daddy’s just getting started on talking to you,” my uncle insisted, holding a handout toward her.

Cami looked over her shoulder and sent a teasing smile his way. “I gotta do what the boss man says,” she explained with a light shrug before continuing to walk away.

“You really need to find someone your own age,” I told him, easing myself into place on the empty bar stool next to him.

His hooded mahogany eyes met mine and I was reminded of just how much he resembled my late father.

“After five hundred and fifty-five years my nephew has finally decided to stop pussy footing around and talk to his uncle,” he announced and all I could do was sigh at his dramatics.

Meet Mathias Porter.

My highly outrageous, mostly crazy, and dramatic (all the damn time) uncle. Despite all the theatrics that he came with and how he could get on my very last nerve, he was still blood at the end of the day and I knew it’d be foul of me to forsake him. Blood was the only reason why I was giving him the time of day today.

“You wanted my attention and now you finally have it,” I informed him, placing my interlocked hands on the bar’s marble counter. “So, speak, Unc. Tell me what’s on your mind.”

“Just straight to the point, huh?”

He grinned but I kept a straight face, honestly just needing him to quit with all the delaying and say what he needed to say.

Mathias looked over his shoulder, did a quick sweep of the room with his eyes before locking them on me.

“It’s been three years since your pops died, kid, and I know how rocky things got between the two of you but it doesn’t change the fact that he wanted you to carry on his legacy with me by your side.”

Annoyance seared through me but I continued to keep silent.

“You’ve been running from this shit for three years now but enough is enough. You need to come and take your rightful place in the family dynasty. Make all these niggas know that the great KP’s son is here and ready to stay.”

Over my dead body.

I knew what was coming from Mathias, had expected it from the second I’d seen his text last week that had told me to hit him back and now that it was here I didn’t feel any less anger coursing through my veins.

But I wasn’t the type of man to show my hand easily or my emotions. Especially when it came to anger which was why it was a mothafucking problem that Jordana had me wanting to pull up at the salon she worked at and make her apologize for leaving my side Saturday morning without a goodbye kiss, in front of all her fellow co-workers.

Rather than lashing out at my uncle, I decided to remain calm while studying him carefully. From the salt and pepper beard he rocked, his bald head to his sunken eyes, anyone could see that middle age had turned up on Mathias’s door. From the fancy suit he donned and the flashy watch around his wrist, anyone could also see that this was a man who exuded money. But no one but me could see deep into these sunken eyes and recognize that Mathias was tired. He claimed he wanted to be by my side but we both knew that was some bullshit.

Running the streets had its way of catching up to you. My father felt it and I’m positive that Mathias now felt it too which was why he was more than ready to hand me the keys to a kingdom that I would never rule. He wanted me to take a seat on a throne that I’d rather destroy than ever sit on.

“Unc, I hear what you’re saying but hear me when I say this. I have no intentions to ever be in that life. You know that and my father knew that which was why he handed everything to you with no worries. He knew that you would be willing to carry out his wishes and support his legacy. But

that was *his* legacy not mine. I've built my own shit and I don't want no parts of the life he left behind."

With each word I'd uttered, Mathias's face twisted more and more with irritation and now that I was done talking, his face had completely hardened.

"That's bullshit and you know it, kid," he retorted. "You had no issues stepping in when he asked you to."

That was true but my father had played on my previous need of wanting his approval and used it to get what he wanted from me.

He knew I was a numbers guy. Always had been. And the financial accounting course I'd taken at Harvard meant that I was even more of a math whiz. I'd looked over a few of his business books as he'd requested and made sure that the numbers were right. It wasn't until a few months after I'd been overseeing my father's books that he slipped in the fact that I'd helped him make sure that his drug money was undetectable in his laundromat money.

That was the last time I'd ever helped that nigga with any kind of business and one of the very last times I'd met him face to face.

"Yeah I stepped in but we both know I had no idea what I was involved in until he came clean to me a few months later," I explained. "But never again will I get involved in a life that sent my mother to an early grave."

I didn't bring her up much because despite her physical body leaving this earth eleven years ago, her spirit was still very much alive in my heart and quite frankly, the memories hurt too damn much for me to want to talk about her. And Gabi never brought her up either which I understood one hundred percent because how could she talk about the woman she'd found dead at the age of sixteen? How could she talk about the woman who'd birthed her, birthed us, but ended her life because of the infamous lifestyle our father chose over her?

"And if you can't respect my decision then I'm afraid you and I have no reason to keep in contact, Unc."

I saw a glint of fear in his eyes and it was like a light bulb went off in his head because his tune quickly changed.

"Of course, I respect your decision, kid. I just wanted you to see things from my perspective… just think about all the possibilities that could come from you taking on the legacy that your father wanted you to have."

You mean the possibilities of me going to jail or Gabi and Kaiser having to pick out my casket sooner than later? I think I'll pass.

"All I want is what's best for you, Genesis. That's all your father wanted too and with him gone, that's my number one job."

"And I appreciate you looking out, Unc. But trust me when I say I'm good on all that."

He didn't try and challenge me any further and for that I was glad. But I had a very strong feeling that this wasn't the end of this topic no matter how hard I wanted it to be.

We spent a few more minutes together – chopping it up about normal stuff, like how GW Eleven was going, how his middle-aged bachelor life was going and how Gabi and Kaiser were doing.

Gabi didn't talk to Mathias much. Just hellos and how are yous over the phone but nothing more. He'd only met Kaiser once when he was a one-year-old but hadn't met him since.

Gabi didn't make a huge effort when it came to our uncle because he was a part of our father's family and as far as she was concerned, anyone from our father's side could go in the trash. She only picked up his calls every once in a while because of the fact that she knew I still messed with him.

Once Mathias had left GW Eleven, I was back in my office minutes later, looking over contracts when two loud knocks on my door made me look up.

"Sir."

In the open doorway of my office stood Jaime, my assistant manager. I nodded for her to come in which she did.

"The interview with the desert company's CEO is next week as you know and Mia phoned this morning to know if it's okay if she brings a few desserts along for you to taste."

I arched a brow. "The fuck she thinks this is? A party? It's an interview, I ain't tryna eat shit."

Jaime playfully rolled her eyes as she took the seat in front of my desk.

"It's a chance for her to show off her skills which is why I already told her she's free to bring however many desserts that she wants."

Of course, you did, Jaime.

I gave her a fake mean mug which made her chuckle. Then I was back to focusing on my iPad that had a renewal contract with the top dollar

cleaning company that made sure GW Eleven was spotless every day.

"And I've set up that hair appointment," Jaime added, making my heart skip several beats. "Jordana was able to fit me in on Saturday."

Perfect.

I looked up from my iPad to stare curiously at Jaime. "And you've sent the payment and given her the address?"

"Yes, Sir. All done. And I've sent her the extra five-hundred-dollar tip just like you wanted."

"She make a fuss?"

"She sure did but I insisted that it was all hers and she wasn't allowed to send it back."

My little miss independent with her stubborn ass.

I smirked. "Good."

I never needed Saturday to come as bad as I needed it to come now. Once I had a plan set in motion, there would be nothing else left to be said until it was done and right now all I wanted was the woman that I couldn't stop dreaming about. She'd become a permanent fixture in my head and now more than ever I wanted her to become a permanent fixture in my life.

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7
jordana

"ISN'T she just the cutest thing ever?"

A smile refused to stop growing on my lips the more I kept my eyes sealed on the brown and black furry creature that I currently held. I raised my hands, lifting the cutie up until I had it directly aligned with my eyes.

"I can't even lie, you are the cutest thing ever," I said before planting a kiss to the top of its small soft head.

"Yes you are, yes you are," I cooed gently, placing multiple kisses to the head of who I now knew to be Charlie's daughter.

When Charlie texted me last Sunday, telling me that she now had a daughter, I was beyond confused.

When the hell had she been pregnant because her flat stomach didn't show one ounce of her being with child? And who the hell was her baby daddy that I hadn't had the chance to interrogate yet?

But Charlie quickly put me out of my misery by sending me a photograph of her daughter. Her four legged, seven inches tall daughter – *Bubbles.*

Bubbles was a yorkie terrier puppy and only twelve weeks old. The more I stared into her small black eyes, the more I fell in love with her. She truly was the most adorable thing ever and I was glad that Charlie was happy with her new responsibility. However, what I couldn't fathom was why this responsibility came about so quickly in Charlie's life.

I gave Bubbles one last kiss on her forehead before placing her down to my lap, allowing her to run free across the sage sofa Charlie and I were seated in the middle of.

"Charlie."

Her eyes drifted away from Bubbles who had ran in Charlie's direction and jumped on her thighs.

"Yes, J?"

Now that she was facing me, I was reminded of just how much of a bad bitch my cousin was. Not like I could ever forget it in the first place but the constant reminder didn't hurt.

With deep-set eyes the color of milk chocolate, a slender and curvaceous frame and long jet-black hair that currently passed her shoulders, thanks to yours truly who had installed her sew in just under two weeks ago, Charlie was what every real man needed by her side and she had a great personality to match. She was sweet, courageous but also a little shy at times.

"You said your manager gave you Bubbles?"

She nodded, smiling down at Bubbles who was now licking on her hand.

"He said he wanted to cheer me up after the weekend I'd had…" She looked over at me again. "You know after dealing with my period coming earlier than expected and giving me more hell than usual."

"That was really sweet of him," I replied honestly before adding, "Too damn sweet."

"That's just how Dane is," she explained. "Always wanting to put a smile on everyone's faces."

Not sure about anyone else but I know he definitely wants to keep a smile on your pretty face.

This wasn't the first time I'd heard about Dane. When Charlotte had first told me about the social media marketing agency that wanted to sign her, his name came up. He'd been the one to personally interview Charlie which was a big deal according to her because he owned the company. And when it came to Charlie needing a manager assigned to her, Mr. Dane the CEO stepped in and took the responsibility of taking Charlie's career to greater heights.

I couldn't even lie, in the past few months that Charlie had been with Opal Dynasty, she'd been bringing in so many sponsorships from major brands that it was becoming hard to keep up with them all. Dane wasn't playing about my CC and it showed from how much effort he put into securing her the best brand deals.

“Are you sure he’s trying to put a smile on everyone’s faces or just yours?” I asked, slipping a serious look her way.

“Huh? What do you mean?” She asked, trying to act dumb when in reality she knew exactly what I was talking about.

“You’re the only influencer he bought a puppy for, right? I don’t think he cares about making anyone smile but you.”

“Dane’s done things for many of the other influencers signed to his company,” she insisted. “I’m not the only one getting special treatment, trust me.”

Charlie I trusted one hundred percent; it was this Dane guy I wasn’t sure I could trust.

“And now we have a daughter together I’m pretty sure she’ll be the one getting all his special treatment.” Charlie’s attention went back on Bubbles who had bunched her body in the corner of the couch behind Charlie. She reached over to pick Bubbles up and started spoiling her with kisses and cuddles.

“Ain’t that right, mama? You’re getting all the special treatment now.”

She was not only referring to her new pet as her daughter but the daughter she shared with her manager.

Interesting.

Whether Charlie wanted to see it or not it was clear as night and day that Dane liked her. And from the way Charlie was refusing to admit that his gift was definitely an elaborate one, I had a feeling that she liked him too. But she just wasn’t trying to admit it to me right now.

I still didn’t trust him though. He was her manager at the end of the day and I didn’t want him thinking that he could take advantage of her by holding her career over her head just in case she rejected him.

I’ll break his face if he ever tries some dumb shit like that.

And once I was done with his face, my three fathers would surely come along and finish the job off by breaking his body in places he didn’t even know could be broken.

All I wanted was what was best for Charlie and I didn’t want any man thinking he could have one up on her by using her successful career against her just in case things turned sour between them.

“So, Dane has been pestering me all week about when I’m free to visit GW Eleven,” she announced moments later after she was done giving Bubbles kisses. “You know I still need to try my signature drink.”

I remained quiet but watched her carefully. The mention of *his* restaurant made heat sizzle through my body.

"So, when are you free so we can head to GW Eleven together this time?"

Maybe in the next five hundred years because Lord knows I'm never again stepping foot in the restaurant belonging to the man that had me screaming his name so much in one night that it had to be a crime.

"I'm kinda swamped with bookings right now, CC," I told her which was partially true. I always had bookings on bookings but I knew how to set boundaries with my job and could always find the time to do the things I wanted to do. "But I don't want you waiting around for me forever. Why don't you go with one of your home girls?"

"Because I want to go with you, silly." She playfully rolled her eyes at me. "I need to make it up to you for last weekend and you still haven't tasted the food of one of the best restaurants in town."

Oh, believe me, I've had a taste of the food, cuzo, and I've also had a strong taste of someone else too.

I hadn't told Charlie what had went down between me and Genesis. Did I ever plan to tell her? Not exactly.

What was the point of telling her about something that wasn't going to happen again? And I most definitely didn't want her getting her hopes up about me finding someone new to cuddle at night which was furthest from the truth.

What happened between Genesis and I was a onetime thing. I'd had this entire week to fully convince my mind of that and now that Friday was here, I was more than sure that me and Genesis…

God, even just thinking about him brings shivers down my spine.

Me and Genesis were not going to join our bodies as one again.

Join your bodies as one? Why are you making it sound like some kind of boring ceremony? That nigga dicked you down in the best way possible and you loved every single second of i—

"Jordana?"

The call of my name pulled me from my thoughts and my eyes focused on Charlie's brown pools.

"Sorry," I apologized. "Just got a lot on my mind."

"Like what?"

Like how Genesis made me squirt twice in one night.

“Just work,” I lied.

She nodded.

“But I stand by what I said, Charlie. I don’t want you waiting around for me forever.”

“And I won’t be because you’ll be free soon and we’ll head to GW Eleven again like we were supposed to do in the first place before my cycle decided to play a sick joke on me.”

I kept silent, knowing there was no point in going back and forth with Charlie about this. She’d made up her mind about us going to GW Eleven together and that was that. But heading back there was the last thing I wanted to do.

What if I run into him again? Who am I trying to kid? I’m definitely going to run into him again. He’ll be there to see Charlie and make sure she likes her signature drink.

I wasn’t sure what I was going to do to get out of going back to GW Eleven but I knew I had to figure it out. It was childish of me trying to figure out how to avoid seeing the man who had blown my back out in ways I didn’t even know were possible but it was what it was.

Getting attached was the last thing I vowed to do with a man again. The last man who I’d gotten attached to, had stolen my heart, and broken it into pieces so tiny that I was certain my heart would never be repairable ever again. Just like Jazmine Sullivan had sung, I’d put a lock on the door where my heart once was and I had no plans to ever open that door.

It didn’t matter that Genesis stayed on my mind twenty-four seven nor did it matter how much I enjoyed myself with him… we could never be.

After Charlie and I shared a meal, I took out her sew in, washed, conditioned and blow dried her hair before installing a fresh sew in for her.

It was a Friday and I’d been at Aubrey’s salon up until six p.m. so technically I shouldn’t have been taking any house calls today but Charlie was my cousin. I’d always make an exception for her and the salon was closed now. So, Aubrey couldn’t even get mad about me doing a house call right now. Luckily, this week at the salon had been a peaceful one. Aubrey hadn’t bothered me and I hadn’t bothered her. I just prayed it stayed like this from here on out.

Saturday morning arrived the next day and I’d never been more ready and pumped for a new day. After a quick morning run, a hot shower and

French toast for breakfast, I was out my apartment and heading downstairs to the parking lot where my Jeep Wrangler was.

I had a house call with a woman called Jaime. She'd DM'd me on Instagram last Sunday but because of how jam-packed my DMs got with requests/inquires, she decided to email me and requested a house call for a sew in as soon as possible. I was booked and busy during the week with salon clients but luckily my Saturday was clear this weekend so it wasn't a hassle fitting her in on the weekend.

What surprised me the most was when she asked for my account details so she could pay in full for the hairstyle before her actual appointment. I tried to tell her it was fine for her to wait until after her appointment to pay me but she was sure that she wanted to pay in advance and gassed up my work that she'd seen on IG. I could still see her email floating around in my head.

Hey Jordana,

Trust me I'm certain about paying you in full now. I've seen your work on your IG and I'm in love with how talented you are, girl. I know for sure I'm going to love you doing my hair.

There was nothing better than receiving compliments about your hard work. After I sent her my details, she was quick to send the money and alongside it came a five-hundred-dollar tip that quickly had me protesting with Jaime through email.

Once again she insisted that the money was all mine and I wasn't allowed to return it. So, I kept it. She then sent me the address of her apartment that I was driving to now and her number to text her on the day of her appointment. I pulled up to an expensive looking apartment building fifteen minutes later and was greeted to a uniformed Caucasian man standing by a sign that read 'valet'.

After grabbing my olive Telfar bag from the passenger seat and giving my car key to the valet, I left my Jeep and walked to the tall apartment building's entrance.

I arrived in the lobby minutes later and was greeted to a modern, elegantly designed environment. White, brown, and silver were the colors that coated the space, it had high ceilings and white marble tiles. A pretty

caramel skinned woman sitting behind a reception desk sent a warm smile my way which I returned.

I headed to the elevator up ahead while whipping out my phone to let Jaime know I was here. She'd already told me to let her know once I'd arrived so she could come get me because to access the apartments you needed to have a key to the elevator which I definitely didn't have.

Within seconds her reply came flying in: *On my way, honey!*

I locked my phone and looked up at the number box at the top of the elevator, waiting for it to start moving from the sixth floor it was currently on. But when a few minutes passed and the number box remained on the sixth floor, confusion flowed through me at the elevator not moving.

Didn't she say she was on her wa—

"Jordana!"

An excited call of my name made me turn to the side where a short walkway was and I spotted Jaime coming toward me.

"Hey, girl!" I greeted her, smiling wide at her friendly demeanor.

She was a very gorgeous woman. Caramel skinned, bright brown eyes, plump, glossy lips, and a tall shapely figure. But what confused me about her look were the black braids that fell past her shoulders. She hadn't said anything about her having braids that I needed to take out.

"I know, I know. Why the hell do I have braids when you're supposed to be doing my sew in?" She tittered after spotting the confused look I housed. "Well, I promise all will be revealed very soon."

I wanted her to reveal whatever the hell *all* was right this second but I wasn't about to be rude to a woman that had already paid for my services in full and tipped me generously.

She led me down the walkway she'd come from and into a different elevator at the end of the walkway. Once we were inside the elevator, she entered a code on a touchscreen keypad that was above one silver button. After entering the code, she pressed the button and the elevator doors shut.

"I don't mind taking out your braids, I just wish you'd told me sooner, girl," I spoke up seconds after the elevator started going up. We were standing side by side and I looked over at her as I spoke.

"Oh, don't worry about the braids, babe," she replied, still smiling at me. "They won't need to be taken out."

What the… if they don't need to be taken out how the hell am I supposed to do her hair?

And I was just about to ask her the question floating around in my mind until the elevator reached the top floor. She brought out a silver key and pushed it into a key slot above the keypad. The silver doors slid out the way to reveal a large living room that stunned me to the point that I couldn’t find any words to say.

“She’s here, Boss.”

But what stunned me even more was when I followed Jaime out of the elevator and locked eyes on the left-hand side of the room where the man I’d had wet dreams about all week, currently stood and was looking at me like I was the only woman in the room.

Oh. Shit.

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8
genesis

THERE'S *that beauty that I just can't seem to get out my head… and honestly, I don't ever want to get her out. She's the best thing I've thought about in a while.*

I'd had plenty of time to figure out what I was going to do about Jordana going ghost on me last weekend. Or should I say, *attempting* to go ghost on me.

I wasn't stupid. I knew exactly how to get in contact with her because the morning I'd woken up without her by my side, I'd gone digging and found everything I needed to know about the woman who refused to stop running through my mind.

I knew where she worked, where she laid her head every night and even where her mother laid her head. The perks of being an extremely successful entrepreneur was having friends in high places that could get you information that not just anybody could easily access.

"I appreciate you, Jaime," I addressed my assistant manager but didn't once take my eyes off Jordana.

She was completely still, barely blinking and staring at me like I was a ghost. Despite my gaze being stuck on Jordana, I was able to notice Jaime nodding at me since she stood right next to Jordana and just as Jaime started saying her goodbyes, Jordana snapped out of the stupefied state that she was in.

"What the hell is going on?" she asked, heat entering her tone.

"What do you think is going on, Jordana?" I questioned her, crossing my arms over my chest as I took this moment to admire her outfit.

She wore an olive v neck jumpsuit that matched the olive Telfar bag she carried over her shoulder. The jumpsuit complimented her figure in the best way possible and I was still in awe that I'd been blessed with the chance to have my hands and lips all over that womanly figure of hers. Her hair was different to when I'd seen it last. Rather than it being straight, it was curled with blonde highlights.

This is how sexy she dresses to work? Fuck, why haven't I seen her dressed like this sooner?

"I think you've pulled quite a few strings to get me here," she sternly replied.

"You damn right I did," I confirmed. "You left me last weekend without giving me the chance to taste you again and you thought I wouldn't find you?"

Her cheeks suddenly flushed warm red and she flashed me a look that was a mixture of shyness and desire.

"No need to be embarrassed, sweetheart. Jaime knows how important you are to me and agreed to help me get you here."

"And there was no way I was passing up the chance to get my hair slayed by you, girl," Jaime announced which made Jordana slowly turn to look at her. "As soon as these braids get old you and I have a date, beautiful. But for now, I have to let Mr. Bossy Boots have the time that he was so desperate to have with you alone. How I put up with working for him is beyond me."

Amusement glinted in Jaime's eyes and the flashback of Monday morning with her quickly popped into my head.

"And I've set up that hair appointment. Jordana was able to fit me in on Saturday."

"And you've sent the payment and given her the address?"

"Yes, Sir. All done. And I sent her a five-hundred-dollar tip just like you wanted."

"She make a fuss?"

"She sure did but I insisted that it was all hers and she wasn't allowed to send it back."

"Good."

"You sure must like her if you're going out of all this way just to grab her attention. I mean I'm more than happy to get a free hair appointment __"

“Who said anything about you getting your hair done, Jaime?”

“You did when you roped me in to book an appointment with your new crush,” she voiced with her head held high and before I could challenge her she was quick to add, “It’s my reward for helping you secure an appointment with Jordana.”

Even just hearing her *name was enough to make me feel weak in the knees and picturing her gorgeous face in my head right now… well that was enough to make the part that lived between my legs come alive.*

“Didn’t you just get those braids freshly done?”

“And?” She arched a perfectly shaped brow at me. “I’m a black woman, honey. I could get my hair done every single week if I wanted to and since you’re paying, I have no issues taking these braids out for a fresh install.”

“You ain’t getting your hair done, Jaime.”

“So, I guess you’re fine with me canceling the appointment?”

I shot her a look that read, ‘You wouldn’t dare’ *and she sent me a look back that read,* ‘Wanna bet?’

I swear despite me being the owner of GW Eleven, my inner circle really ran shit eighty percent of the time. Especially the women on my team. Reya, my executive chef, and Jaime really got whatever they wanted from me when it came to the restaurant and a few other things. But because of how hard they worked for me and how much I appreciated them; I couldn’t even be mad at them getting their way most of the time. I couldn’t tell you the amount of Birkins, Chanels and Diors I’d gifted them in this lifetime so far. Every year for their birthdays they got a new designer bag from me, Christmas, and Easter too. Don’t ask me how I’d been roped into buying them gifts for Easter because still ‘til this day I didn’t fucking know.

“You can get your hair done some other time, Jai. I need that time with Jordana. Alone.”

“Well damn,” she remarked. “You’ve never ever asked me to get involved in your personal life so I know this woman must be important to you.”

She damn sure is.

I kept silent but Jaime continued to speak.

“Alright, fine. I’ll get my hair done some other time. You’ve already paid for the appointment so I can get it done whenever.”

I nodded and focused on looking down at my iPad. Jaime took this as her cue to get gone but just before she got to the exit, I was on her ass.

"And Jaime?"

She looked over her shoulder to stare at me. "Yes, Boss?"

"Don't even think about interrogating Jordana on the day of your appointment."

"Now why oh why would you think I'd do something like that?" She fake gasped before letting out a light giggle and I was shaking my head the entire time she walked out my office.

"Let me leave you two love birds alone," Jaime said, pulling me away from the flashback in my head.

While she headed toward the elevator, Jordana and I held each other captive with our eyes. The more she watched me, the more I could see annoyance growing in her eyes and as much as I wanted to address it right away, I remembered her reaction to me making it known in front of Jaime that things between us were definitely more than platonic.

Once the elevator came up, Jaime got on board, gave me one final wave and when the silver doors shut, Jordana was on me like a bee ready to sting.

"Really, Genesis?" My name falling from her lips made my body burn at the memory of her moaning my name but I chose to push out all the filthy thoughts creeping through my mind.

"You got one of your employees to book a fake appointment with me just so you could lure me to this random ass apartment…" She had her hands on her curvy hips and her eyes bored into mine.

If this is her attempt at trying to come across as mean then she's doing a shitty job because I can't stop thinking about how sexy she looks holding her body like that.

"Is this something you do often? Take valuable time out of women's days just so you can have things your way? Now you got your employee thinking we're love birds?" She let out a cold chuckle that told me she wasn't finding anything about this situation funny.

And neither was I honestly. The attitude I could hear in her voice was starting to piss me all the way off.

"Are you for real, Genesis?" she huffed.

I remained silent, eyeing her closely before lifting my wrist subconsciously to read the time on my silver faced watch.

It was 11:11 a.m.

My eyes bounced back on her and I uncrossed my arms as I moved away from the kitchen island to saunter over to where she stood a short distance away. As soon as I started moving, her anger started fading from her brown pools.

“Genesis,” she called out to me in a timid tone but I ignored her and continued to walk to her.

She had nowhere to look but at me and once I arrived directly in front of her, she had no choice but to look up at me.

“Are you done speaking your piece or you still got some shit you wanna say to me, Dana?”

She looked deep in thought for a few moments before she replied, “I’m done… for now.”

“Uh-uh, you gotta lose that for now shit,” I ordered. “Get everything off your chest right now because once we’ve addressed things that’s it. Ain’t no bringing up the past.”

She went silent and I gave her a few seconds before asking her, “Are you done?”

She nodded.

“None of that nodding shit either, beautiful. Speak to me.”

“I’m done.”

“Good now listen to me when I say this,” I voiced, reaching for her waist with both hands and pulling her in closer to me. “You hurt my feelings, Dana. How the hell you just gon’ leave me like we didn’t share one of the greatest nights ever?”

“It was one night, Genesis. One amazing night yes but still one night.”

“Is that your reason for ghosting me like you didn’t turn me into your own personal slut for the night?”

Her lips parted but no words came out. Instead, she inhaled deeply and I grinned at the realization that she was probably having a flashback to our wild night together. And she was about to have many more because I was nowhere done talking about it.

“Like I didn’t eat that pretty pussy of yours from the front and the back?”

“Gene…” She closed her eyes and took another deep breath.

I lowered my lips to her right ear to whisper, “Like I didn’t make you cum all over my face? Are you for real, Jordana?”

I pressed my lips to her warm skin, peppering her with kisses and inhaling that scent of hers that always drove me insane.

“Genesis,” she whispered and I wasn’t able to stop myself from stroking down the small of her back and grabbing her ass.

“Tell me… what we did… was only… for one night,” I spoke between my pecks on her flesh before lifting my head from her neck so I could stare down at her. “And I’ll leave you alone, Jordana.”

Her brown eyes were like liquid pools of desire as she gazed up at me.

“Tell me and I promise you I’ll never bother you again. If that’s what you want then I’ll respect your wishes.”

She kept silent so I continued talking.

“But we both know what I want and why I went through all this trouble to get you here. You are the only woman other than my sister and Jaime who have stepped foot in my apartment. And as for Jaime calling us love birds, that’s just Jaime being on her usual teasing shit. She knows I like you and will go out of my way for you.

“I know your time is valuable which is exactly why I made sure you were taken care of so you weren’t losing out on any coins while being here with me today. Was it wrong of me to deceive you? Hell yes and I apologize for doing that but I wanted to see you.” I leaned in to press a gentle kiss to her plump lips. “I had to see you. And now that I’ve seen you, I want to be sure that you’re sure that what happened between us was one night and nothing more.”

I gave her butt one last squeeze before letting go of her and taking a step back. But as soon as my hands left her body, Jordana’s hands went to the back of my head and pulled me in close so she could mesh our lips together.

I was suddenly reminded of how much of a temptress this woman was. She had an ass like jelly that I never wanted to stop grabbing on, had a face as pretty as a rose that I never wanted to stop looking at and lips as soft as silk that I never wanted to stop kissing. And right now, she was using those lips to control my emotions and make me forget about what she’d said about our situation only being one night.

Well, she *almost* made me forget.

I pulled away from her lips, angling a firm glance down at her and feeling how brick hard my dick had become in my pants.

“I need you to say it, Jordana,” I demanded, reaching for her wrists that were at the back of my head and gently pulling her hands away from me.

“Tell me what we did was only for one night.”

She began to pout, lifting her hands out my grasp and placing them back on my head. She caressed my low cut hair, looking up at me with those eyes I was now sure were one of my greatest weaknesses.

“It wasn’t just one night,” she admitted, leaning in to press her lips to mine, making every inch of me crave her in the worst way. “It was the best night I’ve had in forever, Genesis, and as much as I want more nights just like that, I need to keep it real with you and let you know that I’m not looking for anything serious.”

My stomach clenched in a cold, icy knot but I did my best to remain stoic as I looked down at her. “Who said anything about things being serious?” I asked.

“I just didn’t want you getting the impression that I was getting attached,” she explained. “That’s why I left you that morning with no warning… that’s why I tried to convince myself that what we did was a onetime thing.”

“I see.” I let my eyes wander off to the side as I thought about how this was the first time ever in my thirty-three years of being on this earth that a woman I was messing with had used the same, *“I’m not looking for anything serious”* line that I’d used many times during my twenties aka my hoe years.

Fuck. Karma really is a bitch ain’t she?

“Was I mad that you set up this whole fake appointment thing with Jaime? Yeah a little but honestly I’m more turned on by how much trouble you went to get me here.”

Her mentioning being turned on made me focus on her face again and any slight bitterness at her ruling out anything more than sex happening between us, vanished. Instead, I was reminded of how turned on I still was by her.

“So, are you going to show me why you went through all that trouble to get me here or are you going to keep wasting time when you know wet I am for you?” She paused and leaned in closer to me until her lips were by my right ear then whispered, “When you know how bad I need you to fuck me?”

Just from her words alone, she’d awoken something inside me so powerful that I’d *almost* lost all common sense in that very moment, *almost*

taken her to my kitchen counter to bend her over it and *almost* forgotten about the fact that I needed to strap up with a damn condom.

Al-fucking-most.

Rather than wasting time denying us the pleasure that only we could provide one another, I removed her bag from her shoulder and chucked it to the floor. Then I lifted Jordana up by her legs, flung her over my shoulder like she weighed nothing which made her gasp and rushed to my bedroom like we had an appointment that we were about to be late for. In this case Jordana definitely had an appointment. A long overdue dick appointment that I'd been dying to give her all week.

As soon as we entered my bedroom, I was quick to place her down to the center of my bed and strip the olive jumpsuit from her body that was shielding the one image that I needed to see the most.

I let my eyes travel up and down her naked frame, biting my bottom lip as I thought about how in love I was with her shape. But as much as I was in love with it, I felt anger crash through me at what she'd done to me last weekend… how she'd left me before I'd gotten the chance to have her wetting my beard up… before I'd gotten the chance to slide into the wonderful passage she carried between her thighs.

Yeah, I'm still salty over that shit.

I wasted no time in ditching my shirt and sweats before strapping up with a condom. And by the time I was towering over Jordana while she lay in the center of my bed, staring up at me with a hungry look, I gripped her waist and flipped her onto her stomach. All that mattered to me was reacquainting myself with the one spot I'd been feining for all week. Her pussy was already soaking so I eased myself deep into her tight slit and my body instantly flooded with heat with each inch I pushed inside her.

"Shit," I cursed, gripping the sides of her waist as I felt her walls clench tightly around my shaft.

"Genesis," she moaned and my lower lip quivered at how wet she was.

Pussy so wet I can feel it through the condom… damn it, now I can't stop thinking about feeling her without a rubber.

I quickly shook the thought out of my head, knowing deep down inside that if Jordana and I ever took that bold step of not using protection, I wouldn't be able to go back to feeling her with one on.

I moved in and out of her with smooth, steady thrusts and each time I sank deep into her tightness, shivers wouldn't stop running up and down my

spine.

Jordana's pussy had no business being this good from the very first stroke and I was reminded of how bad I'd missed being inside her since our last encounter.

Her moans heightened and it wasn't long 'til my pumps intensified.

"Fuuuuck, Geneeee!"

She was on all fours but I suddenly pushed her down to the bed. I lifted my hands to her thighs so I could push them further apart before lowering myself between her legs.

"Ahhhhhh!"

We were in the low doggy position, one crazy ass position that I knew was about to drive Jordana crazy which was exactly what I wanted. I wanted her losing her mind over this dick and I wanted to make sure she never forgot how this dick made her feel.

"G-Gene, I… I…"

I slipped in and out of her warmth, increasing my speed with each passing minute. Each time I pulled my hips back, I would rock them harder against her body, diving myself deeper into her body.

"I-I… I don't think… I c-can take it all," she whispered in a breathless tone and I looked down to see her shifting under me like she was about to go somewhere.

"I know damn well you ain't tryna run from this dick, Jordana."

"Gene… uhhhh! G-G-Genesis!"

I suddenly placed one hand on her neck while the other slipped into the warmth of her hair. Then I pulled her hair, forcing her head back while I lifted my leg up to get a better angle with burying myself into her pussy. I delivered powerful thrusts to her wet middle nonstop and her moans were nonstop too.

"You was talking all that shit, Dana, telling me to fuck you," I reminded her, lowering my head to the side so I could whisper into her ear, "Ain't this what you wanted?"

"Y-Yes!" She cried, arching her back to meet my next thrust.

"You wanted this dick, right?"

"Yesssss, baby," she hissed.

"Don't be running from it then. It's yours. Take that shit."

I brushed kisses across the side and back of her neck while still holding her hair back and dipping in and out of her wetness like a man with an

important task. The only task I had today was making Jordana cum over and over again for the rest of the day. And honestly… I was more than willing to make her cum every day for the rest of the week if she was down. Despite her making it clear that she wasn't looking for anything serious, I still wanted to do this… I still wanted her. And I was going to continue to have her whenever and wherever she'd let me have her.

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9
jordana

MY EYES FLUTTERED open and I was greeted to stray rays of sunlight seeping through the blinds across from where I lay. An arm was draped over my waist and when I slowly began to shift forward, the arm tightened its hold on my body, keeping me locked in place. I couldn't help but smirk and I looked over my shoulder to stare into dark brown eyes. Sexy dark brown eyes that belonged to the man responsible for blowing my mind and back out in ways that I knew I wouldn't be able to stop thinking about for a very long time.

"Someone worried I'm going to leave again without saying goodbye?"

Now it was his turn to smirk and he watched carefully as I turned my body to face him. His hold on my waist loosened slightly as I moved closer to him until the gap between us was completely gone. I placed a hand to his toned chest and let my eyes linger on his for a few seconds before leaning in to press my lips onto his.

The second our lips connected, his hand traveled down my bare back until he was able to squeeze and rub on my ass. The more our kiss intensified so did his movements and it wasn't long till I was letting out soft moans at how good his large hand felt stroking on my booty.

"Mmmh… Gene."

He'd been fucking the shit out of me for hours which was exactly why I'd fallen asleep in the middle of the afternoon like I'd had the best meal of my life. And the best meal I'd definitely had because Genesis had fed me well with all the inches he carried between his thighs. Even with how well I'd been fed I was still hungry for more.

Genesis suddenly climbed on top of me while our lips remained meshed together and my moans heightened when I felt the hard tip of his arousal poke against my lower abdomen.

He broke our kiss, staring down at me with a lustful look. A gentle moan escaped from my lips when he dipped a hand between my legs and stroked my bundle of nerves.

“I’m pretty sure I don’t ever have to get worried about you leaving me again without saying goodbye, Jordana,” he said, continuing to slowly massage my moist folds.

He was referring to the question I’d teasingly asked him moments ago and honestly I was quite turned on by the confidence in his baritone. Confidence that he had every right to have because after the way he’d dicked me down, I was sure that leaving him without saying goodbye could never happen again. Shit, even just a goodbye wouldn’t be enough. He deserved a round of endless applause for the way he’d been dicking me down.

I remained quiet but when he eased two fingers into my tightness, I was no longer able to keep silent and a whimper slipped out from me at the sudden entry.

“Unless you were trying to leave me again without saying goodbye—” Seriousness formed in his brown pools. “—Then I guess I do need to get worried.”

Back and forth his fingers moved, making heat break out across my skin and my desire for him reached the point of no return. Thanks to him rubbing on my butt earlier I was already wet but honestly just the thought of laying next to him on this bed made me wet.

“Because that means someone needs a stronger reminder of the consequences of her leaving me without saying goodbye.”

I sighed deeply, rocking my hips to the steady rhythm of his fingers diving in and out of me while pondering on his words. Having a reminder of the consequences of me leaving Genesis with no warning was something that I didn’t mind at all. But I knew deep down I didn’t have it in me to lie about leaving him again without him knowing.

However, that doesn’t mean I can’t be a little tease right now.

Rather than speaking up, I let my hands roam under the silk sheets until I landed on my desired destination. The second I wrapped my hands around his thick length, his fingers stopped moving in and out of me. His eyes

came fully alive and he let out a strained breath as I gave his dick one smooth stroke. Then I squeezed his hard tip tight, eliciting a low guttural groan from him.

“And if I was trying to leave again without saying goodbye…” I repeated my movement, stroking and squeezing him tight. “What would you do to me?”

His eyes seemed to bore deep into my soul once I questioned him and goosebumps clothed my bare skin with how much deeper his gaze on me had become but I continued to talk, determined to keep my bravado.

“Because all I’m hearing right now are simple words but I’m not seeing any action, Genesis… seems like you can’t do shi—Mmmh!”

Before I could finish my sentence, Genesis’s soft lips came crashing on top of mine and my legs were parted wide, allowing him to settle between them and ease his thickness within my wet walls.

We’d stopped using magnums hours ago because he’d run out of them and we were way too lost in the waves of pleasure to stop enjoying one another. And here we were again, too lost in lust to care about protection.

Despite my moans being muffled by our kiss, a few seeped through and every part of my body was on fire because of his hard pumps between my thighs.

He used both his hands to lift my hands above my head, placing one on top of the other. Then he wrapped a single hand around my wrists, keeping my hands locked in place above my head while he eased himself in and out of my warmth.

Everything about him being inside me I’d grown addicted to. There was no denying it. I loved everything about the way he stretched out my walls, the way he took ownership of my body and made it clear that this was his territory now and no one else’s.

Genesis eventually released my lips, letting my moans come out as loud as they wanted to.

His lips moved to my right ear so he could whisper, “Stop fucking playing with me, Dana. You’re not allowed to leave me without saying goodbye and you know that shit.”

“Ahhhh, Gene!”

“Tell me you know that shit.”

“I… I… I know!”

He suddenly froze inside me and my heart dropped at the abrupt stop to his movements. His movements that I needed now more than ever.

My eyes quickly locked on his when he pulled his lips away from my ear and looked down at me with a firm yet seductive stare.

“You know what?”

I let out a deep breath before replying, “I’m not allowed to leave you without saying goodbye.”

His mouth twisted into a cocky smile and he slowly slid out of me only to slip right back in, making both of us sigh happily at him being right where he belonged.

“Leave me without saying goodbye again, I promise you, Jordana, I’m coming for you at the salon you work at. And your co-workers, your boss and whoever the fuck else is present are all gonna hear you scream my name while I’m fucking you in the restroom.”

I was left speechless by his words and my speechless state only got worse when he continued to fuck me slow, making me feel like I was on a highly potent strain of sativa that had on me the greatest high of my life. This was a high that I never wanted to come down from, a high so intoxicating that without it I was convinced that I would no longer be sane.

Genesis getting all possessive over me and putting me in my place made my desire for him worsen. Even with him currently inside me, his hand holding my wrists in place and his other hand holding onto my waist, my body still ached for him. Ached for him to keep fucking me, keep touching me and keep reminding me of the consequences of trying to leave him without saying goodbye. And being with him now reminded me of how I’d been a fool to think I could never see this man again.

A *big* fool.

Damn me.

I’d been more than stupid. I’d been more than foolish. I’d been more than deluded. Deluded to think that one night with Genesis was enough.

Damn me.

Damn me for thinking that I could have a single taste of him and that would be enough. Damn me for thinking that I could survive with only one

night of feeling him inside me. Damn me for thinking that I could keep it playa and experience a man as majestic as him for a single night then be done with him for good.

Damn fucking me!

There was absolutely no way I would be satisfied with just one night and now that I'd come to terms with it, I was done fooling myself about the new situation I was in.

Lust .

That's all this was. He had no solid feelings for me and neither did I. This was simply lust. Fleeting lust that would be over before either of us knew it. I'd get bored and so would he and then we'd be finished. This was nothing concrete. Nothing solid. Nothing real.

But that dick sure as hell felt real sliding in and out of m—

"Jordana, do you have anything to add?"

I was suddenly pulled away from my intimate thoughts and my eyes focused on the figure standing on the other side of the room. I lifted my back off my seat, keeping my posture straight as I gave Aubrey my full, undivided attention.

"Sorry, are we still discussing the original question?" I asked with my head held up high, knowing fully well I had no reason for my confidence when I'd been zoned out during most of this meeting.

Clearly I was under the curse of Genesis because even after two days had passed since we'd been together, I was still stuck on thinking about him.

What the hell has he done to me?

"You would know if we were still discussing the original question if you'd been listening, Jordana," Aubrey replied, crossing her arms over her chest as she shot an unimpressed look my way.

We were in the main salon area having the staff meeting we had at the end of every month to discuss the salon's progress, Aubrey's feedback on the salon's progress, any announcements she needed to share and any concerns that we wanted to voice to Aubrey. It was also the chance for us all to brainstorm new ideas to help the salon become better.

Kymani, Taylor, Aja and Leilani and me were each sitting in our styling chairs while Aubrey stood at the end of the salon where the reception desk was. Summer her assistant sat behind the desk watching over us and taking notes on her iPad. One thing that Aubrey had made clear when I first started

was the fact that she was all about teamwork. She never wanted the five of us to feel like we didn't have a voice.

Usually, my concentration levels were on point during our meetings but today had proved to be highly distracting. I had no one other than Genesis to thank for that. He'd bewitched my mind to think of no other man but him and there was no cure.

"Actually, I have been listening," I countered, ignoring the stiffness that had formed in my jaw at the way Aubrey was looking at me like I'd committed a crime. "I just wanted to make sure that you were okay with me discussing the idea for us to provide more services for vulnerable women in the salon since you'd moved on to discussing us doing more to keep our existing clientele happy."

Though I'd been thinking about the man that had rocked my world in the greatest of ways last weekend, I hadn't been completely distracted that I didn't know what the hell was going on.

At Aubrey's we did free hair services for homeless women and women in shelters seeking refuge from domestic violence and the idea to increase our services for vulnerable women had come up during the meeting. I had an idea about how we could do more for vulnerable women such as organizing personal photoshoots for them to feel even more like the queens they were but I wanted to make sure that the original question of increasing our charity services could still be discussed or if we'd moved on completely.

Giving Aubrey the opportunity to berate me in front of the rest of the girls was a huge no no and I'd be dumb as hell to allow it to happen. Especially today of all days when I was in a good mood after the unexpected encounter I'd had with Genesis.

The unimpressed look that Aubrey housed quickly faded away and a small smile curled her lips as she kindly asked me to share my thoughts. I had a strong hunch that she was butt hurt about not being able to catch me out since I'd actually been listening to this meeting but oh well. One thing she could never say was that I didn't pay attention to work.

"Boss lady almost caught you slipping earlier."

I looked up from the takeout box I held to stare into the large cognac eyes of no one other than Kymani.

"For a second I thought she was about to whoop your ass cause she thought you weren't listening." Kymani tittered and my lips curled upwards

as I started shaking my head at her.

“I’d love to see her try,” I replied, dipping my chopsticks into my takeout box, and collecting noodles.

“I get that she’s our boss but sometimes I wish she’d take a chill pill,” Kymani said as I lifted my noodles and slurped them into my mouth.

“Always on our cases like we’re her damn children or something.”

I nodded in agreement while chewing.

Kymani looked over her shoulder to stare at the empty doorway behind us that led to the salon’s main corridor before locking her eyes back on mine.

“I personally think she’s just jealous of how much success we’ve brought to her salon. I mean what would she do without us? We’re her bread and butter.”

I swallowed and pulled more noodles to my mouth while listening to Kymani vent. It was real bold of Kymani to be talking shit about our boss while we ate lunch in the break room that our boss had designated for us. But being bold was just one of the many traits that Kymani owned and I’d gotten used to it during the ten months that I’d known her so far.

“I don’t know how much longer I’ll be able to take of her being a total bitch. Sure, the money is great but could I still make greater money being in my own space? One hundred percent!”

The same way I’d considered leaving Aubrey’s salon, Kymani had considered it too and she’d told me about her thoughts to get her own space.

“But I guess we’ll just have to see what the future holds,” she voiced with a half shrug.

But the same way I haven’t taken that fearless step of going out on my own, Kymani hadn’t either. Leaving Aubrey’s wasn’t a small decision to make at all and honestly, it wasn’t a decision that I desperately wanted to make.

“We’ll just have to see,” I said. “But look on the bright side, we enjoy working here and though she may be a bitch at times, she always makes sure we get what we rightfully deserve. And let’s not forget about the free spa trips.”

Kymani let out a light laugh before quickly nodding. “How could I ever forget about those?” She sighed happily. “Damn now you got me wanting to hit up Tyler… I need those hands on my body tonight.”

I shook my head at her. “With the amount of times you call him in one month I’m surprised he hasn’t got a restraining order on your ass.”

She gasped. “Ty would never do me like that! He knows I’ll go crazy without him…” She ran her hands down the front of her apron covered body until she was able to place her hands on her bikini area. “And so would she.” She smirked before sticking her tongue out and wiggling it at me.

“Your nasty ass. I don’t know whether to be jealous or disgusted that you have orgasms whenever you get massages.”

Kymani laughed wildly before carrying out her desire to shoot Tyler, her masseuse, a quick text to find out his availability for today.

Sure, there were cons of working at Aubrey’s but boy oh boy were there pros. I was making great money, working with women who looked like me, had great exposure on social media through Aubrey, got the chance to take extra courses to learn about the hair industry that Aubrey footed the bill for and received a free trip to the spa each month.

Aubrey had said she wanted us to be able to unwind and relax from working on our feet every week which is why she covered the cost of us going to the spa once a month. Kymani was addicted to her masseuse Tyler which is why she happily covered her own extra appointments that she wanted with him.

Aubrey also covered one vacation per year for each of us girls to go to any country that we desired. So, it wasn’t completely terrible working for her. However, her covering spa trips and vacations wasn’t the reason for why I continued to stay. Sure, those things were nice but I stayed because I genuinely liked my working environment… I just wished sometimes that Aubrey would take a chill pill like Kymani had suggested and learn to be more laid back.

“Yassss, he’s free!”

Seeing Kymani’s eyes light up with excitement once she got confirmation from Tyler that he had availability this evening made me think back to the man that had dominated my mind since I’d first woken up today.

I looked over at my phone that was next to my now empty takeout box and debated with myself about what I had the sudden urge to do. Was what I was thinking to do a good idea or not?

Of course, it’s a good idea. You want him and with how much trouble he went to see you last weekend, it’s clear that he wants you too.

I was still so turned on by what he'd done. Yes, anger had overcome me when I first realized what he'd achieved with Jaime's help but that anger quickly disappeared the more I looked at his handsome face and realized just how much I'd missed him. How much I wanted him in that very moment.

He'd taken care of me by making sure that the money I would have earned from doing Jaime's hair was already in my possession before I'd even met Jaime.

What a boss.

Never in a million years could I have guessed that he would do something like that but I was glad he'd done it. I was glad he'd gone through all that effort to get my attention and I was particularly glad that he was on the same vibe as me when I said I wasn't looking for anything serious.

I was here for a good time and so was he. So, there was no harm in me messaging him to see if he was down to blow my back out all over that gorgeous apartment of his, right?

We'd already christened his bedroom but I was more than willing to let him have his way with me all over his apartment. His apartment that looked like it'd been custom made for a king. With its high ceilings, elegant decor, and floor to ceiling windows, it had me feeling like I was in a home belonging to royalty.

I was still in awe that he had two homes and honestly quite impressed. He was clearly a man that enjoyed convenience and comfort. He told me the reason for his apartment was because he liked having a place close by to his restaurant and whenever he didn't feel like heading to his big ass house (his words not mine) then he could easily slide through to his apartment with no hassle.

I was also in awe by how attentive he'd been with me last Saturday. After fucking my brains out, he made sure that he fed me with lamb chops, mashed potatoes, and green beans. A meal he'd prepared while I'd fallen asleep for the second time that day after he'd explored my body. He was a great cook which I wasn't surprised by because he owned one of the best restaurants in the city. And not only did he walk me all the way down to my car downstairs before we parted ways last Saturday, but he also made sure that I put my number in his phone which he called immediately so I could save his number.

I'd almost been tempted to spend the night with him at his apartment but we'd been messing around all day and I was sure that he was getting tired of me. When I arrived home that evening, I made sure to do as he'd asked by telling him that I was home and after he'd acknowledge my arrival, I received a text message from him with a screenshot picture of his latest STI test results which were all negative.

He was already one step ahead in making sure that I was aware of his sexual health status and I loved that. I also sent him a screenshot picture of mine and I'd already mentioned to him that I received a birth control shot every three months from my gynecologist to help with my heavy periods. It'd also been handy when I'd decided to embark in a hot girl summer just under a year ago. However, my promiscuous days were long gone when I'd made the decision to focus on my career.

Genesis making sure I'd eaten, making sure I'd arrived home safely and making sure that I knew his sexual health showed that he was clearly a man that paid attention to detail and made sure the people he had around him were all taken care of. Memories of the first day I met him flew into my head. The way he'd looked at me… the way he'd been affectionate with Gabi and Kai… the way he'd been certain that I deserved the tip he wanted to give me.

Yeah I definitely need to see him tonight.

Without thinking twice about it, I reached for my phone, unlocked it, and headed to my messages.

Hey, I began to type in the chat we shared but I suddenly cleared the text I'd started and decided to come on a different type of energy.

I have a problem, Gene.

Three gray dots appeared in our chat moments later and his response came flying in.

Genesis: *A problem?*

Genesis: *I can't have that.*

Genesis: *Tell me what's wrong so I can fix it, sweetheart.*

My heart warmed at his response.

Me: *I can't stop thinking about all the ways you fucked me last weekend.*

Me: *And how bad I want you to do it again.*

Me: *All over your apartment this time.*

Genesis: *Damn.*

Genesis: *That sure does sound like a problem.*
Me: *Do you think you can help me?*
Genesis: *I can definitely help you with your problem, Dana.*
Genesis: *But you have to agree to what I want first.*
Me: *Which is?*
Genesis: *Dinner at mine.*
Genesis: *Then I want you for dessert.*
I felt heat stain my cheeks as I read his reply.
How could I ever say no to that?
Me: *Deal.*

This new situation between Genesis and I was simply lust. Fleeting lust that would soon be over before we both knew it and we would each go our separate ways once we'd gotten what we both wanted from each other.

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10
genesis

ALL IT TOOK WAS one last thrust and I was done for.

"Ssssshit," I moaned in her ear.

Even with the pull of Jordana's pussy, tempting me to pour my load into her, I knew better than to abandon the common sense I had. Pulling out had never been an issue for me but damn it I'd be lying if I said that I didn't want to place every last drop of my nut inside Jordana. There was just something about being inside her raw that made me want to fill her up and even though I knew she was on birth control, I didn't get revolted at the thought of her carrying my child.

Entertaining the idea of a woman becoming the mother of my child? Now that was a fucking first. With women I'd slept with in the past, the thought of not using a rubber never crossed my mind. But with Jordana, I just couldn't help how I felt. With her shit just felt *different … real … powerful* .

Her pussy had power and I could finally relate to Gunna's *P Power* , a track that constantly played in rotation on my Apple Music hip hop playlist. That pussy had so much power that I wasn't mad at the thought of Jordana carrying my seed when we hadn't even known each other for a full month yet.

What could I say other than she was carrying a tempting treasure between her thighs – the type of treasure that made a man like me want to surrender my childless bachelor life and become a baby daddy? Make her pretty ass become a baby mama in the blink of an eye. She had baby mama coochie and the more I experienced it, the more I never wanted to let it go.

Once I pulled out of Jordana and released myself on her ass cheeks, her moans and cries started to ease down and I kept my gaze focused on her reflection in the mirror in front of us.

My teeth sunk into my bottom lip at how sexy she looked coming down from her fifth orgasm of the night. Yes I'd been counting because I liked knowing just how many times I made her reach her peak and it only provided me with more incentive to top the number. If I could have it my way, she'd be cuming one hundred times every night that we shared together.

Beads of sweat had formed on her forehead and her wildly tousled hair feathered around her heart shaped face. She only had me to thank for the untidy state her hair was in because of all the hair pulling I'd been doing while stroking deep inside her.

I moved from behind her only for a brief moment to grab a fresh towel from the towel rack over by the walk in shower behind us. Then I was standing behind her again, wiping her ass cheeks that I'd ejaculated on.

Just seeing the slight movement of her ass while I cleaned it was enough to make my excitement grow which I found strange as hell when I'd just finished bussing all over her.

There has to be something wrong with me.

"Oh my God," her tender voice made me look up from my wiping and lock eyes on her hypnotic dark browns. "I look a mess."

She was staring deep at her reflection in the mirror and I didn't miss the mortified look that formed on her gorgeous face.

I leaned in closer to her and dropped a kiss to the left side of her neck before whispering, "No the hell you don't. Quit saying that shit." My eyes lifted to meet hers in the mirror. "You look sexy as fuck and I'm already getting the urge to be inside you again just so I can watch your pretty face while you take this dick again."

Her eyes glowed hot with desire and a rush of color crept up her neck, tinting her light skin pink.

We were both naked, standing in front of my bathroom sink and I had no doubt in my mind that I'd helped Jordana with her problem that she'd texted me about earlier today:

I can't stop thinking about all the ways you fucked me last weekend. And how bad I want you to do it again. All over your apartment this time.

We'd christened almost every spot in my apartment. The living room, the kitchen, the balcony, the guest bedroom, my bedroom, my bathroom where we were now and even my damn walk in closet I'd broken her back out in. We were like two rabbits unable to stop humping. I couldn't keep my hands off her and I couldn't stop the constant urge I got to be buried inside her either. She had the body of a goddess that I was becoming more and more addicted to.

Moments after I was done wiping the both of us, I had the desire to have a bath and I wanted nobody else but Jordana joining me. I thought at first she'd decline my request when I asked her to join me for a bath but she didn't. Pleasing me very much.

But nothing pleased me more than when I had her resting on me while I leaned against the tub and my hands cupped her full breasts. I stroked them nonstop while my lips stayed pressed to the side of her face that I occasionally peppered with kisses.

"Your numeral tattoo… what number is it?"

Hearing her question sent a wave of heat from my stomach to my chest.

"Eleven."

"That number sure does mean a lot to you," she replied, letting out a satisfied sigh as my hands continued to work their magic on her boobs. "You put it in the name of your restaurant."

"I did."

"Why is it so important to you?"

"Well… Ever since my mother passed away I've been seeing the angel numbers 11:11. Whether it's on my phone, on my watch, I see 11:11 every single day."

She slowly turned to look up at me with intrigued eyes.

"Every single day?"

I nodded. "Every single day. And if I miss 11:11 a.m., I always see it at night. Most days I catch the two times on the same day."

"Oh wow… that's special," she said. "I'm sorry to hear your mother passed away."

"Don't be sorry, love." I pecked the side of her face once more. "As much as I miss her, I know she's at peace."

A silence formed between us but it wasn't an awkward one. More of a comforting one.

Jordana pressed her back deeper into my chest and just that little movement made me tingle all over.

“But as for your question on why the number eleven is so important to me? The number eleven is said to represent spiritual awakening and new beginnings. Some people see it as good luck too. I’ve been seeing eleven eleven ever since my mom passed so to me it’s her way of reminding me that she’s watching over me and I just hope she’s proud of the man I’ve become.

“But it’s also a sign that I’m on the right path. The number one is the very first number and my name Genesis is the first book of the bible – the book where God created the world and everything in it. He manifested and created a new beginning for billions of beings, millions of animals… shit, look at my ass going off on a tangent. My bad.” I chuckled.

“No please, don’t apologize,” she insisted. “I love hearing you talk.”

I felt my lips curl into a smile and I nodded at her then continued speaking.

“He created a new beginning for so many in the book of Genesis so for me the number one is *my* number and since I’m seeing it presented in eleven eleven each day, I believe it’s my sign that my life is only going to keep getting better with greater new beginnings that God wants me to have.”

“I love that,” she said. “I’m sure with how much you’ve achieved in life so far your mom is proud of you. How could she not be? You own one of the best restaurants in the city, Gene. That’s definitely something to be proud of.”

The more I looked down at her, the more I could feel my heart swelling with joy.

“And how could I forget how much of a great brother you are to Gabi? And even though I’m still convinced that I can become Kaiser’s favorite person after his mom, you hold that spot undoubtedly. I noticed the way you were with the both of them the day I first met you. You shower them both with love and support which is what every man should do for those that he cares about. Your mother has every reason to be proud of you, Gene, don’t ever doubt that.”

This woman… God, why was she so sweet? Just from her words alone I was one hundred and ten percent certain of me being smitten by her. The fact that she’d brought up my sister and nephew proved to me that she

noticed me. The days she'd been with me ever since our first night, she'd heard me on the phone to Gabi because one thing I always made certain was that I called my sister every single day. Even on the days we'd see each other, I'd always make sure to give her a good night call.

Despite this not being anything other than sex, Jordana was noticing me and her caring enough to bring up my brotherly nature in our conversation was a huge turn on. She was encouraging me and convincing me of my mother being proud of me.

Without being able to stop myself, I pressed my lips to hers, anxious to get a taste of her. My hands that had been massaging her breasts I let drop under the soapy water so I could grab her thighs and spread them wide.

"Mmmh… Gene," she moaned between our lips when my right hand slipped between her thick thighs.

I dipped two fingers into her tightness instantly feeling how wet she was. I pulled my lips away from hers as I pulled my fingers out of her pussy only to slide them back inside her. This time deeper so the entire length of my fingers were buried inside her wet box. Then I used my thumb to rub on her clit.

"You are so fucking sweet, Dana… paying attention to me and shit. Do you know sweet you are?"

Her moans increased in volume when the speed of my fingers fucking her increased and my thumb continued to caress her clit.

"Geneee," she softly cooed my name while looking up at me.

"You must know how sweet you are," I said, watching her intently. "Cause I do."

Desire burned in her eyes and the direct eye contact she gave me while I pleasured her with my fingers, I found incredibly sexy.

"And you taste even sweeter, Jordana."

She parted her thighs wider, giving me more access to work her wet middle. She started grinding her hips under the water and I bit my lips watching her.

"Yeah, spread those thighs wider for me. Matter fact, put them up on the edge, Dana. *Now* ."

She did as I asked, propping her feet up on the edge of the tub and continued to move her hips in rhythm with my fingers thrusting into her.

"Uh-huh, ride those fucking fingers… good girl," I whispered before branding my lips to hers and dipping my tongue into her mouth.

I had no doubt in my mind that I was becoming more and more addicted to Jordana but I didn't care. I was happy for her to become my newest addiction and I didn't want or need a cure.

I hadn't mentioned this to Jordana but I'd caught 11:11 the day I had Jaime bring her to me. That right there was a sign to me that the new journey I was about to take with Jordana was meant to be.

We were both in agreement that what was happening between us was nothing serious but whatever the hell this was, it felt right and I didn't want to let go of it just yet. Even if we were just supposed to be in each other's lives for a season then so be it. But I wanted this season to last for as long as it possibly could because the thought of no longer having a taste of Jordana was a thought that made uneasiness stir in my stomach.

"A nigga gotta start booking an appointment to lay eyes on you these days."

"Just admit that you missed me and you were lost without me, nigga."

He flashed a lopsided grin my way before letting out a loud laugh.

"Oh, you wish, nigga."

I too grinned and leaned forward to swipe my glass of Remy from the glass coffee table ahead. I brought it to my lips, took a sip of the spicy brown liquor and kept a focused gaze on the only man on this earth that I trusted enough to call my best friend.

We were currently in Dane's penthouse suite, sitting on separate sofas with a coffee table in the middle of us. He lived in the apartment building next to mine and we both just happened to live on the top floor of our buildings. What could I say other than my boy and I loved being on top? He was the CEO of his company and I was the CEO of mine. Our ambition was another thing we had in common.

"So, tell me what's new with you, Mr. Busy.com ?" he asked curiously.

And because I trusted him enough to call him my best friend, I knew that keeping my new situation with Jordana a secret just wouldn't be possible.

We'd known each other for over a decade now so Dane was pretty much family to me. Harvard was where we'd met. We'd chosen the same degree, been in the same dorms and gotten on like a house on fire. He was

everything I needed in a friend. A great listener, funny and loyal. Back at Harvard, he would encourage me on the days that I couldn't be bothered to uplift myself. He believed in me during some of my darkest hours and remained by my side despite my attempts to push him away. Being Dane's friend felt as easy as breathing and I'd forever feel blessed to have him in my life.

He'd proved to be a much better family member than the other males in my family because unlike them he wasn't concerned with trying to make me become someone that I wasn't, he accepted me for me. Something that my father couldn't ever seem to do and remembering my uncle's attempt at trying to get me to take over a legacy that I wanted no parts of, made me realize that he was slowly adopting the same attitude my father had had toward me.

I placed my glass down to my lap, holding it in place while I thought about the right words to say to Dane.

"Awww shit," he suddenly said, making confusion fill me. "What is it?"

I arched a brow.

"With the look that just flashed in your eyes I know something's up, G. So go ahead and spit it out."

My lips immediately lifted into a smile.

Not only was Dane a great friend, but he could also read me well. Him and Gabi were the only two people who could get me to reveal my emotions easily.

Make that three people. You know damn well Jordana's got your nose wide open.

Ignoring my thoughts, I raised my glass to my lips, emptying the contents down my throat and feeling my chest burn at the cognac moving into my system. I placed my empty glass down to the center table then decided to stop delaying and reveal what I wanted Dane to know.

"The night that Charlie was supposed to come and try her drink, she invited her cousin along as her plus one."

"Jordana?"

Hearing *her* name drop from his lips was enough to make my body sizzle. But seeing familiarity grow in his chestnut eyes made a slight pain form in my jaw.

"I had no idea Charlie had invited her cousin… now that I think about it I didn't actually ask her who she was bringing along 'cause I was lowkey

afraid she was gonna tell me that she was bringing along a nigga with her." He let out a light chuckle but it was clear from the emotionless look on his face that he wasn't finding anything funny.

"I ain't actually met her but Charlie raves about her all the time."

The pain in my jaw instantly stopped when he mentioned that he'd never met Jordana. I knew my boy was solid but the thought of him having any relations with Jordana prior to me, *intimate relations* , almost made me want to fuck him up and tell him to stay the hell away from her from here on out.

"So, I take it that you met Jordana that night when Charlie didn't show up?"

I nodded before adding, "But that wasn't the first time I'd met her."

His eyes widened.

"Gabi and Kai were spending the week with me and Kaiser's hair needed doing so I told Gabi to invite over the woman who does his hair. Come to find out, it was Jordana."

"Oh wow… then y'all crossed paths at your restaurant."

"Yup."

"And let me take a wild guess…" He smirked. "You just happened to find your way in the middle of her thighs at the end of the night."

"I really can't stand you, nigga."

"What?" He tittered. "I'm just saying what I deem to be true. You fucked her."

I wasn't able to hide the smile that danced on my lips.

"Of course, you did. You probably been plotting since the very first second she walked through your door."

"I mean did I think she was attractive the first day I laid eyes on her? Hell fucking yes but I honestly thought I was never going to see her again."

"But you did at GW and you then decided to make your move on her."

I nodded.

"So, you both shared one night and then what?"

"She left the next morning before I could grab her digits."

"Oh, so this is why you need my help. You want her num—"

"Who the hell told you that?" My brows snapped together.

"You got it?"

I nodded.

“What? How? She left yo…” His words trailed off and a sudden look of realization donned his face. “I almost forgot who my best friend is. You found her, didn’t you?”

“Sure did,” I replied, smiling as the memory of her entering my apartment filled my mental.

“Of course, you did.” He chuckled. “Of course, you fucking did.”

I just continued to smile as Dane shook his head at me.

“So that’s all you now? She’s the one you’re gonna be snuggling up with at night?”

“Relax,” I said, catching the teasing tone in his voice. “She’s not looking for anything serious and neither am I.”

“She said that shit?”

“Yeah,” I confirmed with a firm nod.

“A’ight then so this is just some fun for both of y’all. No strings attached.”

“No strings attached,” I repeated, feeling a tightness form in my chest as soon as I’d uttered the words.

Ding!

I looked over at my phone lighting up on the coffee table ahead and reached for it.

Catching a glimpse of *her* name made me sit up straight and the tightness that was once forming in my chest was now no more.

Jordana: *You got any plans tonight, Sir?*

We’d seen each other three days ago and every time I walked around my apartment I was flooded with flashbacks of me dicking her down all over my house.

I do now, I typed after unlocking my phone.

Me: *I’ll come pick you up at eight.*

Me: *How that sound?*

Her response was swift.

Jordana: *That sounds perfect.*

Jordana: *But are you sure you don’t have any other plans?*

Jordana: *I don’t wanna intrude.*

Me: *You are my plans, Dana.*

Me: *Be ready at 8.*

Jordana: *Okay.*

“Now that I think about it, Charlie still hasn’t tried her drink,” Dane announced, making me look up from my phone. “I gotta remind her about it so she can try it ASAP.”

“There’s no rush,” I replied coolly. “Whenever she’s ready my team and I will be ready too.”

Dane nodded before lifting his drink to his lips.

“Speaking of you and Charlie,” I voiced, locking my phone, and dropping it to my lap. “When are you gonna man up and tell her how you really feel?”

Dane threw his head back as he gulped down his liquor. Rather than nursing his drink he was bent on consuming it quickly and that right there was the biggest tell of my best friend being on edge.

Once it was all gone, he dropped his empty glass to the table and let out a heavy sigh.

“I don’t know, man… shit’s just so complicated. For starters, I’m her boss.”

“And? That ain’t stop you from giving her a damn puppy.”

“That was just a gift.”

“A gift you now both call your daughter?” I chuckled. “Come on, nigga. You know better than to lie to me.”

Dane pressed his back to the sofa and let out another heavy sigh.

“Yeah I gave her a puppy but I’m pretty sure she just sees it as a gift from a friend. Nothing more. She ain’t feeling me like that, man.”

This nigga.

From the things that Dane had told me about his relationship with Charlie, there was no way that she just saw him as a friend. From the late-night calls, they shared talking for hours and hours, the texts they’d send each other whenever they weren’t face to face – I was positive that there was a spark between them. A spark that Dane was just too blind to see.

He was convinced that Charlie saw him as a homie and nothing more. And that didn’t make no damn sense to me because what type of homie buys a puppy for a girl and she’s down with it being called their daughter?

Dane definitely wasn’t just Charlie’s homie and before I could speak up to voice my opinions about their situation my phone went off.

Ding!

I quickly lifted it from my lap, thinking it was the woman that I was excited to see tonight but seeing my uncle’s name made my lips press tight

into a grimace.

Nephew, when are you next free? I wanna spend some time with you.

"You good, G?"

"Yeah, man. My uncle just texted me wanting to see me soon."

"And from the look on your face I'm guessing you don't wanna see him?"

"Not really," I admitted.

The recollection of our last encounter in my restaurant and him voicing his desire for me to take over from my father's unlawful hustle made dread creep up inside me.

"He's your uncle though, G. He's probably trying to make an effort after the bullshit he said when he came to see you at GW."

Yes, Dane knew everything about my life. Every single detail including the darkest parts so hearing him report what my uncle had done wasn't a surprise. There were no secrets between us. Never had been and never would be.

"Yeah probably…" I stared down harder at his text.

I really wasn't trying to hear anything more about my father or the shady shit that he'd left behind. But I also remembered the fear I saw in my uncle's eyes when I told him that if he couldn't respect my decision then I would cut him off.

He knows how I feel and he said it himself that he respects my decision. So, what's the harm in spending some time with him? He is family after all and he's trying to make an effort like Dane said.

"I guess I should make the effort to see his old ass more."

"You should," Dane agreed.

I definitely had my reservations but at the end of the day Mathias was blood and despite my decision to not be involved with anything pertaining to my father, Mathias still messed with me and made an effort to keep in contact with me.

Even when my father was pissed with my decision to distance myself away from him and the infamous world that he loved, Mathias remained the levelheaded one and kept me close. We used to be extremely close until my father passed away three years ago and Mathias was forced to take over. He got busy so his calls became lesser and lesser until eventually he stopped calling at all. But three years later and here we were. Back in contact.

I was an uncle to Kaiser and I knew that if Kaiser ever decided to distance himself from me when he got older, I would be broken. That was never going to fucking happen though because my bond with that kid was solid as a rock but I only thought about the possibility of it happening just to put myself in my uncle's shoes. And now I felt bad for even entertaining the idea of cutting him off. That old man would definitely cry for forty days and forty nights if I ever did that to him.

Just give him a chance, Gene. He's family.

I decided to listen to my voice in my head and my best friend. Mathias was family at the end of the day and the golden rule was to never turn your back on family, right?

I unlocked my phone to respond to my uncle and let him know when I was free this week before continuing my conversation with Dane.

I just prayed Mathias took heed of my warning because if I even got a whiff of him trying to convince me to take over my father's drug empire then I would most definitely cut him off without thinking twice about it.

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11
jordana

“IF THIS IS you trying then I think maybe you need to sit this one out, Peanut.”

Out of my three brothers aka fathers, *Jaxson* was the most empathic one. Always taking into consideration my thoughts and feelings. He never failed to give me his shoulder to cry on whenever I needed support and he was a great listener. Though I loved him dearly, I ignored him and kept my eyes on the bouncing ball in front of me.

“Nah leave her weak ass. She’s convinced that she can actually beat all three of us and I for one would love to see the look on her face when she realizes that she can’t.”

Jaiden was the one who teased me the most. I mean they all teased me any and every chance that they got but Jaiden made it his life mission to tease me the most. But the same way he would tease me, he was the one who always knew how to make me laugh without fail.

“None of that crybaby shit too when you lose, Jordana. You take this ass whooping like a champ.”

And how could I ever forget about *Jasiel* . Out of my three brothers, he was the bluntest and though he was harsh on me at times, he never failed to keep things real with me.

“All of you shut up and play the damn game,” I snapped, rolling my eyes at their commentary.

We were standing in the driveway of our mom’s house. It was large enough to play basketball and since our momma knew how much the guys loved their basketball; she felt no ways about having a basketball hoop at the front of her home.

“Don’t say we didn’t warn you, J,” Jaxson replied with a light shrug before doing a quick spin move that I didn’t see coming and racing across the court while bouncing the ball.

Of course, me being the determined player that I was meant that I felt no ways about chasing after him. He quickly aimed his ball at the hoop and it went in, making my brothers gas him up for scoring so early on.

For the next twenty minutes, it was me against them. Even with me standing at five ten, I was like a little pony being around them. They were all above six foot two. Jaxson being the tallest followed by Jasiel then Jaiden. I had no business shooting hoops with these three giants but I had a point to prove. I too could chill with the big boys.

The irony of me calling them big boys when I was the oldest at twenty-seven. Jasiel was born a year after me then Jaxson came along and lastly, Jaiden.

I admit they had me in the first half. They would constantly throw the ball over my head, doing all types of tricks and Jaiden almost succeeded at breaking my ankles but luckily I didn’t lose my balance.

“Give up, little one,” Jaiden taunted while dribbling the ball between his long legs. “You’re only playing yourself when you know good and well this win is ours.”

They’d scored twenty-one points between them and I’d only scored three.

I huffed but didn’t grace him with a reply and waited for him to come closer. I already knew he was gonna throw it over my head to shoot since we were in the middle of the court. Jaxson and Jasiel were on the far end of the court, giving me the advantage to do what I was about to do.

When Jaiden got closer, I ambushed him by lifting my hands to his shirt and tickling his belly.

“J, get of…” Within a split second, his hysterical laughter slipped out of him and he lost focus of the ball.

As soon as it dropped, I gave Jai one last tickle before rushing to grab the ball.

“You little cheater!” I heard Jasiel yell.

I dribbled the ball in front of me, rushing away from my brothers who were now chasing after me and quickly took my shot.

Even with the ball still in the air I ran toward the hoop to grab it as soon as it dropped out the hoop.

Once it was back in my hands I was quick to take another shot and just when I thought I could grab it as soon as it dropped out the hoop again, I felt my feet leave the ground and an arm wrapped around my waist.

“Noooo, let me go!”

“So that was your plan all along, huh?” Jaxson chuckled. “To distract one of us and stay by the hoop so you could keep on scoring.”

“Such a sore loser,” Jasiel commented before tutting at me. “You’re done, J. Take the damn L.”

Jaxson lifted me away from the hoop, giving Jasiel the chance to reclaim the ball and take another shot. Taking them to thirty-four points while I’d only scored a measly five. Not only did they have me in the first half but the entire duration of the game they had me too.

“I really should beat your ass for using my weakness against me,” Jaiden told me when we were back inside momma’s house, each cooling down with a fresh glass of strawberry lemonade.

I snickered, knowing how much Jaiden hated being tickled. Even just the slightest touch on one of his ticklish spots was enough to make him laugh nonstop which was exactly why I’d targeted him on the court.

“But the fact that we beat you on the court today is all the satisfaction I need.” He grinned, making me flip him the bird.

His mouth formed an O and just when his snitch ass called out to our momma, she yelled back, “Jaiden, can’t you hear I’m on the damn phone?”

I smiled at his failure to snitch on me and sank deeper into couch while holding my lemonade. Momma was in the kitchen on the phone to our aunt while we were chilling in the living room.

After all the running I’d done on the court, I needed some rest. I hadn’t worked out in a hot minute so all that running had definitely worn my ass out. But I wasn’t as out of breath as I’d thought I’d be and I knew that was down to the way my body had been worked out by Genes—

“You were terrible out there, Peanut,” Jasiel commented, snapping me away from my intimate thoughts about the intimacy I’d shared with Genesis. “Why you even thought you could beat us is beyond me.”

“I’m almost embarrassed for you,” Jaxson said with a head shake. “Y’all saw the way she was shooting the ball too, right?”

Jasiel and Jaiden nodded while laughing at my expense.

“Fucking terrible,” Jaiden said. “I’m surprised she even scored at all.”

“Haha very funny,” I spoke up, shooting a frosty look in all their directions.

I sat on Momma’s favorite armchair on the left-hand side of the room while they each sat on the center couch that was opposite the mounted TV.

“Awww the crybaby’s hurt,” Jaiden teased. “Don’t worry, crybaby, maybe next match we’ll let you win.”

“Y’all may have beat me today but we all know who’s about to whoop all your sorry asses in the next uno match.”

They all went into an uproar and I couldn’t help but laugh wickedly at how worked up they were getting about something they knew to be true. Every single uno game we’d played this year I’d won. I was known as the uno queen in my family and none of my brothers had ever beaten me. The only person who had ever beaten me was our mother because like me she was quick-witted when it came to playing uno.

Eventually, the boys started talking about the next NBA match they planned to watch and I zoned out of their conversation, allowing my thoughts to wander back to Genesis.

Two weeks had passed and almost every night, I’d spent in his bed. Every night seemed to only get better than the last and I swear a part of me craved him each more whenever we were about to part. We’d been together last night and we’d already agreed to see each other Monday night which was tomorrow.

Was I becoming too addictive to this man? I’d been the one to tell him that I wasn’t trying to get attached and I wasn’t looking for anything serious but yet here I was, spending too many nights in his arms, having his alluring lips all over my body and letting him dive between my thighs over and over again.

What could I say other than the sex was good… no, ignore that whack ass statement. The sex was *fucking* amazing which was why I wanted more and more of it whenever I could have the chance to.

I’d been celibate for just under a year and prior to my celibacy, I’d been on my hot girl shit. I had two sneaky links in rotation that wanted a taste of me almost every week and it’d been fun getting all that attention (and dick) from two fine ass men. But honestly after a while it just got old. It got old laying down with men that I didn’t see a future with and it got old opening my legs up only for there to be a fifty percent chance that I was going to orgasm.

So, I decided that there was no more doubling back to old sneaky links. I was done with that. I chose to learn more about my own body, pleasure myself and invest in the best sex toys on the market.

But then came along Genesis Washington.

Genesis, Genesis, Genesis.

He was the first man I'd let be inside me without protection since my ex. The first man who had made me squirt, the first man who made me orgasm multiple times every time we had sex and the first man I'd actually chased since my ex. Ever since my ex shattered my world three years ago, I vowed to never chase a man again. But here I was, putting an effort in with Genesis. And even though it was just sex and I knew we weren't getting into anything serious; I was still taking the time out to hit him up, check on him and get to know him better.

I'd given his assistant manager, Jaime, a fresh sew in last weekend. She'd been such a kind soul to me and talking to her had been refreshing. Even when she'd briefly brought up my situation with Genesis, I didn't feel any type of way because I'd been enjoying our conversation from the start.

"Please tell me if I'm overstepping, honey, but you and Genesis… you two look good together."

"You're not overstepping. You have every right to be curious about the woman your boss made you book an appointment with."

"An appointment that was fully paid for by said boss. Girl, I have no issues doing it again if it means I can be slayed by your hands!"

"You're too kind."

"But seriously, you two look good together. That's the number one thing I couldn't stop thinking about when I left you both that day."

I smiled. "Well thank you, babe."

"I'm rooting for y'all."

I chuckled. "Oh, there's nothing to root for. Me and Genesis are just having some fun."

I hadn't been shy with my words to Jaime because she'd known from the second Genesis had asked for her help in getting me to his apartment that we were intimate. And how could I forget about the question he'd asked me in front of her that day?

"You left me last weekend without giving me the chance to taste you again and you thought I wouldn't find you?"

I still couldn’t believe he’d said that in front of her without a care in the world. But God I’d be lying if I said it didn’t turn me all the way on.

I wasn’t afraid to keep it real with Jaime about what Genesis and I were doing because she was well aware. In a way it was nice to admit it to someone because I damn sure hadn’t told Charlie about me even meeting Genesis. I don’t know why I hadn’t gotten round to it when I spoke to her almost every day. I guess a part of me was lowkey worried about how she’d react. Would she be happy I was spending time with someone new or annoyed that I was messing with someone she collected a bag from every month? She was his brand ambassador at the end of the day and they were in business together. I didn’t want her thinking the worst of me messing with someone that she worked with on a professional level.

I couldn’t keep my situation with Genesis away from her forever. I just needed to find the right way to tell her. I prayed I found that way sooner rather than later.

I came to the end of the braid I’d just cornrowed and once it was completed, I smiled down at my work. I grabbed the edges brush from the tools I had laid out on a towel on the sofa space next to me and reached for the Kids Original conditioning gel. Once I’d applied a little on my brush, I then lifted it to his hairline so I could lay down his curly edges.

“And we’re all done, my love,” I said looking down at the adorable face of my favorite little customer.

He’d been focused on the SpongeBob SquarePants episode playing on the TV screen mounted on the wall in front of us, but now that I’d spoken up, his attention was on me.

“We are?” Kai asked in that cute toddler voice of his that never failed to melt my heart.

“Yes we are.” I reached for the white handheld mirror next to me and positioned it in front of him so he could take a look at his new hair-do.

The minute he caught his reflection in the circular mirror I held for him, his entire face brightened up. I’d given Kaiser six cornrow braids that went all the way past his shoulders and stopped just at the middle of his back. He looked cuter than ever and I was glad he loved the braids.

“Thank you, Jordy!”

“You welcome, cutie.”

“Look at how good you look, Kai… I swear I’m gonna miss you getting your hair braided.”

My head turned to the left where Gabi sat looking radiant as ever. The side-parted pixie bob on her was everything. It framed her oval face perfectly and made her look younger than she actually was. We were both the same age, but Gabi didn’t look a day past twenty-one.

She was sitting at the dining table while Kaiser and I were in the living room. She had an open plan living room which made her living room, kitchen, and dining room one large space. Her townhouse was stunning and extremely homey. Cream, gray and brown were the three colors that adorned her abode. Like me Gabrielle was a plant mom. She had a large palm plant in the right hand corner of her living room and a money plant in the left-hand corner. A large abstract painting was hung on the white wall in front of the TV and standing framed photographs of her, Kai and Genesis were positioned on the floating wall cabinet under the TV.

I’d only seen the main downstairs part of her home but I loved everything about it. From the abstract paintings that hung on the walls to the furniture that had been picked out, she was clearly a woman with taste and knew how to execute her classy style well.

“I’m definitely going to cry like a big baby when he gets his hair cut next month,” Gabi said, making me crack a small smile.

I was now at the dining table in the seat next to Gabrielle while Kaiser was sitting in the center of the living room with his toys all around him.

Though I’d finished Kaiser’s hair, I was in no rush to leave because I loved being around Gabi and her son. This was my third time doing Kaiser’s hair and Gabi and I had gotten a lot closer.

While I’d been doing Kaiser’s cornrows, Gabi had her MacBook open in front of her with her iPad beside it and since I now sat next to her I could see exactly what she was working on.

Her next poetry book.

“You won’t be crying for long once you end up realizing how much you love his new look,” I told her. “He’s too cute so every hairstyle looks good on him.”

She beamed at my compliment about her son. “Yeah, true… but I’m still gonna miss the braids on him. I’m secretly hoping he quickly gets bored of

the haircut so we can grow out his hair again."

I chuckled, knowing how much Gabi loved Kaiser's curls. But she'd asked him how he felt about getting his haircut and when he said that he wanted to cut it, she decided to respect her son's wishes. He was going to get it cut next month at a local barbershop with Genesis right by his side.

"And I'm definitely going to miss seeing you work your magic on him."

"So am I," I admitted.

"Don't be a stranger, girl. You know you're welcome here anytime. Kaiser loves you and so do I."

My heart leaped with joy. "I love you both too. There's no way I could not come and visit y'all."

She smiled harder at me then looked over at the bright screen of her Mac. "I swear this next book is about to drive me crazy."

"What's wrong with it?"

"The poems feel too bland," she explained.

"No way," I disagreed. "I've read your work girl and the word bland just doesn't describe your work. You're so talented."

And talented she was. The day she'd given me her IG and I'd found out what she did for a living, I didn't have it in me to not check out her work. Lord knows I was glad that I had.

Her poems were breathtaking. No seriously… they physically took my breath away. She knew how to craft such vivid and ethereal imagery that I hadn't been able to stop reading. I was sad when I'd finished reading the four poetry books she currently had traditionally published. She'd truly been blessed with a gift and she was so humble about her success. She had over one hundred and fifty thousand Instagram followers, over one thousand ratings/reviews on each of her published books and a blog page with over fifty thousand subscribers. She really was doing the damn thing and I felt privileged to be in her presence.

"Thank you, girl. You don't know how much it means to hear you say that because most days I feel like such a shitty writer."

"Well, you're not. So, stop thinking like that," I ordered, reaching for her hand that was sitting on her lap and squeezing it tight. "You're amazing, okay?"

She gently nodded and I eventually let go of her hand.

"I'm actually surprised you're working on a new book this soon when your next book is out next month."

“So am I,” she revealed. But I had a sudden spark of creativity one night and decided to act on it.” She let out a light sigh. “I think I need to take a break though. I don’t wanna burn myself out.”

“Yeah you definitely deserve a break. Take the time to relax before you start stressing about your next release which I’m sure you have no reason to stress about. I honestly can’t wait to read it.”

“I’m glad you can’t wait to read it.” She smiled at me. “As for me stressing, you’re totally right about that but I think I’m more stressed about the book launch event that Genesis—” Hearing his name made my body come alive and a longing whispered through me. “—is hosting for me at his restaurant than the actual release of the book… oh, speaking of the event, you should definitely roll through. I would love to have you there.”

“And I would love to be there,” I replied with a bright smile. “When is…”

The sound of a door opening made my words trail off and bewilderment spiraled through me.

Don’t Gabi and Kaiser live alon—

“Uncle Genieeeee!”

As soon as Kaiser started yelling, he was racing full speed ahead to the man that was in the front foyer. For a second I thought I was about to meet Kaiser’s father but he’d never come up in conversations that I shared with Gabi and I’d never actually seen him around so clearly I’d thought wrong.

“What’s up, little man?”

I heard *him* before I saw him and not only could I hear his footsteps walking through the house, but I also felt him. Every part of him. His energy was one like no other and it was something I’d grown to feel extremely comfortable around.

“You good? How was school today?”

I listened to Kaiser tell him all about his day while pondering on the fact that he was actually here. Tell me why I was now fighting against the smile tugging on my lips.

When he stepped into the room with Kaiser on his hip, I looked over at him and our eyes connected.

Damn, he looks good.

Seeing him dressed in a white fitted t-shirt and white sweats immediately made me feel breathless. His casual fit was clean from head to toe, not a single imperfection on the white cloaking his body. He looked

like one beautiful angel that had come to remind me of the pleasure that only he could provide me. His shirt clung to his muscular frame in all the right places and the more I stared at those large arms that I'd had around me many times for the past couple weeks, the more my body ached for him.

And that face… God, I'd missed riding that face even though I'd definitely sat on it recently. Two nights ago, to be exact. His handsome face was responsible for conjuring my flashbacks to all the nasty little things he'd been doing to me.

"Hey, Gab."

"Gene," Gabrielle greeted him. "What a pleasant surprise."

I'd caught the hint of sarcasm in her tone and now looking at the toothy smile taking ownership of his mouth as he placed Kaiser to his feet then walked over to where we sat at the dining table, I realized that this wasn't a surprise at all to her. Only me. But what turned out to be an even bigger surprise was when Genesis approached me first and reached for my hand then lowered his lips to it. Planting a sweet kiss on my skin.

Of course, me being the simp that I was meant that I melted at his gesture but another part of me was burning with shame at what he'd done. In front of Gabi.

"Hey, beautiful," he greeted me, his deep voice sending a shiver to my soul.

"Hey," I replied in a meek tone.

Then he left my side and went to properly greet his sister with a hug. Leaving me to sit with my embarrassment that Gabi knew I was messing with her brother without being able to tell her first.

The next few minutes I found quite awkward. Even when Genesis left us alone so he could spend some quality time playing with Kaiser in the living room, I was still uneasy by the situation.

Gabi continued talking to me like nothing had changed, asking me if I was down to attend her book launch. I obviously said yes, knowing that I didn't have it in me to miss her event. I wanted to support her because I genuinely liked her as a person and her work. We also talked about her being excited to see her new book cover, she was doing something different this time from her usual cover designs and had enlisted the help of her friend that was a painter to create it.

When I told Gabi that I was leaving a few minutes later, Genesis was quick to get up from playing with Kaiser and say that he would walk me

out.

Once I'd given Gabi and Kaiser a goodbye hug each, Genesis and I were side by side, walking down the short walkway leading to the foyer. As soon as I was by the front door, I felt his hand on my waist and I was gently pushed back until my back hit the door.

"Gene—" I didn't get a chance to finish talking because his soft lips came crashing onto mine and I suddenly became like putty in his hands as he seduced me with his mouth.

But I was still very much in my feelings about what he'd done in front of Gabi so I tore my lips away from his seconds later and placed a hand to his hard chest.

"Genesis, no."

I looked up to see his brows knitted while he stared down at me.

"Your sister and nephew are down the hall," I reminded him in a hushed tone.

"So?" He wet his plump lips and pressed his hand deeper into my skin. "Gabi knows about us."

He'd confirmed what I already knew but tell me why I still felt some type of way about it.

"She's not only my sister but she's one of my bestest friends and we don't keep secrets," he explained. "Besides, I just can't help myself, Dana. You're looking too fucking sexy and you know how crazy I get around you."

I remained silent, unable to stop the heat flooding my insides with him being this close. His seductive cologne had invaded my nostrils, his baritone enveloped me like a soft, warm blanket, his face was the best image I'd seen all day, my mouth watered at the thought of being able to taste him right now and my hand that was on his chest desperately wanted to stay put. He'd awakened all five of my senses without even trying and that right there was all the confirmation I needed to know that I officially needed to chill on us.

You keep this up, girl, and you're going to get attached which is the last thing you need right now.

I dropped my hand from his body and crossed my arms over my chest.

"I'm coming to get you at—"

"I can't tonight, Genesis," I sternly cut him off. "Something's come up."

Any evidence of emotion slipped from his face and all that remained was a blank look and it was at this exact moment that I realized I'd never seen him angry.

"What?"

"Something's come up," I repeated. "I can't be with you tonight. I'm busy."

It looked like he wanted to say something but he caught me off guard when he gave me a simple head nod and stepped away from me. Giving me much more space than before.

"A'ight," he replied.

I didn't bother saying goodbye to him as I turned around to open the door. I just walked out without saying a word and shut the door behind me.

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genesis

I NOW OFFICIALLY HATED THE word busy. Hearing Jordana tell me that she was busy only made my heart sink into my stomach and watching her leave without saying goodbye made anger sear through me.

I had no right to be mad. I had no right to stop her from leaving me because she was free to do as she wished but God did I wish I'd stopped her and made her tell me why she was lying to me when we both knew that she wasn't busy tonight.

I was mad about her not saying goodbye and lying to me but most of all, I was mad that she wasn't mine. Because if she was mine then the thought of not keeping it real with me never would have crossed her mind.

"I know you told me that you and Jordana are both uninterested in getting into something serious but I quite like the idea of you two together," Gabi announced minutes into us starting an episode of Real Housewives Of Atlanta.

Kaiser was currently sleeping in the warmth of his bed upstairs, leaving Gabi and I downstairs in the living room.

Gabi was the only woman who could get me to sit down and watch an episode of reality TV. I hated reality TV and grumbled whenever Gabi put Real Housewives on but deep down I knew I'd become invested in the show. Despite how messy the show could get, I found it quite attractive that black women were on a show being about their business and getting money. I liked women who got money but I still intended to pay for every mothafucking thing when it came to the women in my life.

I didn't respond to Gabi's comment about liking Jordana and I together but I nodded while keeping my eyes on the mounted screen ahead that

showed Kenya Moore in her confessional, chatting shit about one of her fellow cast mates.

I hadn't been lying to Jordana when I told her that there were no secrets between me and Gabrielle. I'd told her about my encounter with Jordana at my restaurant and the fact that we were now messing around. Initially she was shocked but then she revealed that she'd noticed the way I couldn't take my eyes off Jordana when she'd come to do Kai's hair in my house. I could always count on Gabi to notice shit which was exactly why I remained as cool and collected as I could while sitting next to her, knowing fully well that I was fuming about Jordana canceling our plans for tonight.

"I invited her to the book launch next month and she said she'll definitely be there."

"Cool," I replied, ready to change the subject. "It's gonna be a great event."

"With you in charge I know it will be," she agreed before letting out a light sigh. "I just hope people don't think the book is completely terrible."

"How many times do I have to tell you to stop that shit, Gab?" I frowned at her. "You are a great writer and your readers are going to love your next book."

I was pulling out all the stops for Gabrielle's book launch party. Her fifth poetry book was coming out next month and I'd been in contact with her publishing house to make sure that her book launch would go off without a hitch. I'd hired one of the best event planners in the game to help me organize the launch and so far everything was looking good. The only thing that was left to do was finalize the performer that I wanted for the party. Victoria Monét was one of Gabi's favorite artists and I was willing to pay an extremely fat check to make sure that Victoria sang all of her best hits on the night. I also wanted her hosting Gabi's event because I knew how happy it would make Gabi and anything to add to her happiness I would do.

On the day of Gabi's launch, I was shutting down GW Eleven so that only her guests would be attendance. The main restaurant area was where the launch was going to be held, not in one of the private dining rooms. Gabi's event was going to be big and needed all the space possible. I was willing to not allow a single customer in my spot on the day of her launch because that was my sister and she deserved nothing but the best.

“God gave you a wonderful gift to share with the world and you’re blessed to be making a living doing what you love. Doubting yourself is natural but you can’t let your doubts win. They’re false. You’re a beast with the pen, sis. Unbeatable. Don’t ever forget that.”

A wide smile spread across her face. “What would I ever do without you gassing me up, Gene?”

I too smiled, glad that I’d managed to wash away her doubts.

After giving Gabi some much needed words of encouragement, the topic of our uncle came up. She mentioned that he called her a few days ago, out of the blue, to check up on her.

“He said he wants to visit me and Kai sometime soon.”

“And how do you feel about that?”

She lightly shrugged and I eyed her suspiciously.

“Gab…”

“What? It’s no secret that I’m not a fan of our sperm donor’s side of the family.”

I cracked a grin at her reference to the nickname she’d been calling our father ever since we decided to cut him and his toxic ways out of our life.

“But he’s making an effort,” I reminded her. “It won’t hurt to give him a chance. He’s family.”

“Yeah I guess… but I still need to think about it though. It’s not just about me, it’s about Kai too and I need to ask myself if I’m willing to let someone in my son’s life who I know is an active lawbreaker.”

I nodded, completely understanding her reasons for not wanting to open up to our uncle straight away. I would never force her to do what she didn’t want to do so whatever she did decide, I would be straight with.

As for me, I’d made my mind up. I’d already had a screwed-up relationship with my late father but with my uncle I wanted things to be different. Yeah he was a criminal but he wouldn’t be in the game forever. It would be great for me to have a solid father figure in my life and honestly, at this point in my life I felt like I needed one.

I was seeing Mathias on Saturday which was five days away. What was also five days away was Charlie’s visit to GW Eleven.

Dane had made good on his word and reminded Charlie about her signature drink that she needed to try. She would be at the restaurant with a plus one and a part of me wondered if she was bringing Jordana along with

her. And just like that, Jordana dominated my thoughts once again and an ache formed in my chest at the memory of her lie.

"Something's come up. I can't be with you tonight. I'm busy."

I didn't know what was up with her and even though I desperately wanted to know, I also knew that I had no right to know. She wasn't mine and what we were doing was simply having some fun. There were no strings attached. No feelings involved. We were just fucking and that's all Jordana wanted us to do. How I felt deep inside wasn't important. And if she wanted to put an end to our situation, I couldn't do shit about it.

My eyes remained trained on the checkered board below me. I moved my chess piece forward one square before lifting my gaze to dark brown eyes identical to mine.

Mathias looked like my father and so did I which meant our resemblance was undeniable.

A look of determination coated his face and he moved a chess piece forward in the exact spot where I knew he would move it. Then it was my turn again and I moved my final piece forward before announcing, "Checkmate."

Disappointment shrouded his eyes and a frowned pulled at his mouth.

"I don't know whether to be mad or impressed that you've beat me three times in a row."

"Oh, I'd be mad as hell," I taunted. "You're getting way too old, Unc. You can't even beat me in a simple game of chess anymore."

He immediately extended his middle finger at me and I wasn't able to stop the hearty chuckles that poured out of me.

Saturday had finally come and as promised I was spending time with my uncle.

We were in his three-bedroom home that was a twelve-minute drive away from my home. People thought that I had high taste but I didn't have nothing on my uncle. His ten thousand square foot home made my house look like a tiny hut. It had three floors, came with an elevator and not only did he have a pool in his backyard, but he also had a pool on his roof. Yeah my home was nothing compared to his.

So far we'd shared a meal that his private chef had whipped up for us and we'd just finished our third game of chess.

He was actually the one who taught me how to play chess so it really was ironic that I'd beaten him three times in a row.

After we were done playing chess, we moved to his wet bar with our empty glasses in tow. While I sat on a bar stool, Mathias was on the other side of the bar about to pour me a fresh glass of cognac but I placed a hand over my glass.

"I'm driving, Unc."

"Oh yeah," he replied, lowering the bottle above his glass. "More for me then."

I watched him fill his glass to the brim.

"So, when am I going to meet your girlfriend, younin'?" he randomly asked, taking me completely by surprise.

"Ain't got a girlfriend, Unc," I said, watching him take a sip from his glass.

"Why?"

"The same reason why you ain't got one," I told him. "I'm out here living my best bachelor life just like you are."

He chuckled. "Yeah but I ain't choose this life, it chose me," he revealed. "If I could change it I would."

I noticed the grave look that donned his face.

"What do you mean? You can change it."

"Nah, kid." He shook his head from left to right. "I can't. I knew exactly what I signed up for when I took over from your father and from that moment on I knew I would never want to put a woman in the same position that your dad put your mom in. That's just not me and even with my retirement on the horizon I still feel like it's too late for me to try and settle down. That life path just isn't one I'm supposed to embark on."

"But it isn't too late. You can still find the woman of your dreams once you've left the game for good."

He gave me a look of uncertainty but I was determined to change his mind.

"You said it yourself that you're not trying to put a woman in the same position that my father put my mother in and once you've retired, the woman you fall for won't have to endure the sins of your lifestyle because you would've left it all behind."

He went quiet for a while, looking deep in thought before saying, “You make a good point, nephew. But only time will tell if I ever fall in love and put my bachelor days behind me. As for now I’ll continue living my best bachelor life!”

I smirked, watching him raise his glass toward me before he gulped down his cognac.

We spent a few more minutes catching up before I finally decided that I needed to head home. I had a very busy night ahead of me and as much as I was enjoying spending time with my uncle, I needed to get going.

“Next time you need to catch an uber or some shit, nephew,” Mathias told me as he walked me out. “How you gon’ come to my spot and not drink with me?”

I chuckled before agreeing to have my driver come drop me off and pick me up the next time I decided to visit him.

While I drove home in my Bentley, I contemplated about my uncle’s words about not wanting to put a woman in the same position that my father had put my mother in. I respected his candor because once upon a time I really thought that him and my father were exactly the same. Two cold ass niggas who didn’t care about anyone but themselves.

My mother had suffered in her marriage with my father because of his inability to choose his family over the dangerous game. That nigga had dreams to be the biggest drug dealer in the city and he’d successfully attained that dream, not giving a damn how it’d affected the people in his life. And it was because of him and him alone that my mother had taken her life eleven years ago.

Twelve minutes later, I’d arrived home and I looked down at the silver face of my Audemaur to see the time was seven-thirty p.m. Charlie’s booking was for eight-thirty p.m. leaving me with exactly one hour to change out of my current clothes and head over to GW Eleven.

Dane told me he was rolling through tonight also but I had no idea if he was coming down with Charlie or visiting my restaurant by himself. I knew the only reason he was coming down tonight was for Charlie and I just prayed he didn’t lose his shit if Charlie’s plus one was another nigga.

Who am I kidding? Of course, he’s going to lose his shit.

I had no idea who Charlie was coming with tonight but a part of me was hoping that it was the woman I’d been missing all damn week.

While picking out my clothes in my closet, I thought about how empty my week had been. I hadn't received a single text from Jordana and it had definitely left me feeling some type of way.

A few days ago, I'd received a text from one of my old flings, Tahiry, asking if I was down to link up. We hadn't fucked in ages and I knew she was missing me but the thought of being inside someone other than Jordana just didn't seem right. It didn't matter how much of a baddie Tahiry was with those killer curves of hers and that fat ass.

The thought of hitting up one of the baddies I used to keep in rotation also crossed my mind. Yasmine was one of the few lucky women that received a huge gift from me in this life. I'd decided to pay for her BBL, liposuction and breast augmentation last summer. I even covered the cost of the damn faja she had to wear after surgery and the lymphatic massages she had to get for her recovery. She'd had a full body makeover on my dime and as a thank you she let me sample her fully healed body whenever I wanted it.

Then there was Noelle, an ex-employee of mine, who knew about my habit of giving out Chanel bags like a hug to the women I loved and knew exactly how to suck both my balls at the same damn time. She became possessive as fuck though, thinking we were a couple and shit so I had to fire her ass. I'd broken my golden rule of not fucking around with any of the women I had on payroll and regretted it right away when she started acting up. Luckily for me, I'd made her sign an NDA when we started messing around so she couldn't run off to the blogs and chat shit about me. But even after firing her I still slid through to her crib a couple times because there was just something about her toxic ass that used to have my dumb ass excited.

And how could I ever forget about Kymani? I hadn't seen her in over a year but I hadn't forgot about all the nasty little things she'd loved doing to me. She had double Ds and let's just say she knew exactly how to put them to use. I'd allowed things to fizzle out between us because I knew she was starting to catch feelings. She started trying to get to know me on a deeper level when she knew that was the last thing I'd wanted, especially after she admitted to me that she'd cheated on her boyfriend of three years with me. I didn't even know she was in a relationship until three months of us messing around. It left a very bad taste in my mouth and despite how much I loved doing freaky shit with her, I quickly cut her off.

I thought that maybe sliding inside someone else would help me forget about the fact that I was feining for Jordana. However, none of the women in my past fucking mattered to me anymore. I couldn't bring myself to hit any of them up. It didn't matter how good they looked or how good the sex had been. All I wanted was Jordana. None of those women had anything on her.

Fuck. I'm in trouble.

The more I stared at my reflection in the full length mirror in front of me, the more I noticed the hunger in my eyes. The hunger for nobody else but her.

I'd only known the beauty for a month and a month was all it'd taken for me to become addicted to her. At this point, it wasn't the sex that I missed the most. Sure, I missed diving inside that juicy pussy of hers but honestly I just missed her. I missed hearing her voice, holding her, and touching her in ways that only I could. Physical touch was my number one love language and I'd never wanted to be fluent in a language until I was around her.

You need to get a grip, man. This is just sex and you know it.

I shook off all thoughts about Jordana and fixed the collars of my shirt. I was now fully dressed in a white shirt, black pants, and black dress shoes. I'd decided to keep it simple tonight but made sure to include my silver cross chain, iced out Audemar and silver diamond studs. I gave myself one last look in the mirror before leaving my closet and heading downstairs to the front door. Then I was on my way to GW Eleven in my Bentley and less than fifteen minutes later I'd arrived.

GW Eleven was lit tonight. It was a Saturday evening so I expected nothing less. But the atmosphere was extra lit because Kaytranada was doing his special DJ set in the bar room at 9:30 p.m. and a lot of his fans had booked a table in the main restaurant to enjoy a meal before the show.

As soon I stepped in I was greeted by all my employees and stared down by many customers in attendance. My face was quite familiar because I'd done many magazine covers like Essence, Forbes, and GQ to promote my restaurant empire. So, I was used to the stares. Especially the lustful ones from the opposite sex.

I made my way into the main restaurant with only one destination in mind and as soon as I stepped in, I let my eyes scan the large, bustling room

until I found who I was looking for. In one of the best booths in the restaurant sat Charlie and sitting right next to her was Jordana.

She's here.

But as soon as I noticed who sat next to her, a burning sensation formed in my chest. She was laughing at something he'd said and all I kept thinking was, *What the fuck is so fucking funny?*

I slowly approached their table and when I was a few steps away, Jordana finally looked my way and my body started tingling.

God, why is she so damn pretty?

I was only seeing her upper body right now but that didn't hide how good she looked in my favorite color of them all – dark red.

"G, my man!" Dane greeted me.

"What's up, D?" I gave him a respectful nod before bouncing my eyes to the man that sat next to Jordana. "Elijah."

Elijah was Dane's cousin. Someone I rarely saw because to put it simply, he was an asshole. Dane had told me how most of their family didn't fuck with Elijah and I didn't blame them one bit. He was arrogant as hell and believed that everyone needed to bow down to him.

When he realized that I wasn't everyone, he quickly changed the way he came at me and treated me with respect which I couldn't respect because why didn't he possess the common sense to treat everyone respectfully regardless of their status? I knew he was only being fake friendly with me because of the fact that I owned GW Eleven and I had no room for fake, arrogant fucks like him. Luckily, he was Dane's headache to deal with in this life not mine.

"Genesis." He grinned widely. "Good to see you, man. It's been a minute."

I nodded before looking over at Charlie who was beaming at me.

"Hey, head boss in charge."

"Now what I'd tell you about calling me that shit, CC?"

She giggled. "You are the head boss in charge though," she teased, knowing how much I hated her calling me boss because even though we had a business relationship we'd developed somewhat of a friendship over the past few months. "Oh, Gene, this is Jordana, my cousin. Jordana, this is the owner of GW, Genesis."

Oh, we've already met, love. Many, many, many times.

And I was just about to make that clear to her until Jordana blurted out, “Nice to meet you, Genesis.”

It felt like way too much time had passed since I’d heard her sexy ass voice and now that I was hearing it, I couldn’t stop the flush of heat that rushed through me. But the heat wasn’t just from the desire I felt for her, it was also because of the anger I felt due to what she’d said. I stared at her silently, tempted to call her out on pretending to not know me until Elijah suddenly lifted a hand and snapped his finger.

“Waiter,” he called out to someone behind me. “Another lemon drop with tequila for the beautiful woman I have by my side tonight.”

Jordana tore her eyes away from me to look over at him with a small smile. “Thank you, Elijah.”

He took this as Jordana giving him consent to reach for her hand that was on the table and after he slowly lifted it to his lips, he pressed a kiss to her hand.

“It’s my pleasure, baby girl.”

Every muscle in my body tensed and my heartbeat shot to the roof.

Dear God, please forgive me if I lay hands on this nigga tonight for touching someone who doesn’t belong to him, one part of me said.

Yeah but she doesn’t belong to you either, the other part of me said.

And that right there was enough to make me come to my senses and stop acting like I had any right to feel the way I was feeling right now. She wasn’t mine and there was nothing I could do about her being cozied up with a nigga that wasn’t me.

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jordana

REALLY, Jordana? You just told the man that you've been in the arms of almost every night that it's nice to meet him. The man that's been dicking you down for weeks! You're so stupid!

I panicked, okay? I'd been on edge ever since I'd arrived at GW Eleven. This time Charlie and I had arrived together. A repeat of her not showing up like last time was highly unlikely since she'd already had her period this month but I wasn't trying to risk anything. I made sure to meet up with her at home so we could make our way to GW Eleven *together* .

Charlie had texted me during the week to let me know that she'd had enough of Dane pestering her to go try her drink and that we were going together this Saturday whether I was free or not. She was willing to drag me out of my house and get me in a car to head over there, *her words* not mine. So, I finally gave in and told her I was down to go, knowing fully well that I was shitting bricks at the thought of seeing Genesis… especially after how I'd left things between us at his sister's house last week.

Charlie and I had every intention of drinking tonight which was why we made sure to catch an uber to GW. Now imagine my surprise when we arrived at the packed full restaurant and were escorted to our table only to see two handsome men sitting in the booth next to ours. When one of them immediately got up and couldn't take his eyes off Charlie, I knew without a doubt who he was.

Dane.

I could see exactly why and how Charlie had fallen for this man. He was very easy on the eyes. He had clear espresso brown skin, dreamy

brown eyes, a broad nose, and pink plump lips surrounded by a thin mustache that extended down his face to form a light bed of chin hair.

He was clad in a navy silk shirt, black pants, a silver chain, and an iced out timepiece was locked around his left wrist. The brotha was fine and I'm positive even a blind person could sense the swag that this man possessed.

After greeting Charlie with a hug, that I noticed went on for way longer than it needed to, he turned his attention to me.

"It's a pleasure to finally meet you, Jordana," he greeted me, reaching for my hand which I gave him. "Charlie has told me so much about you."

"Good things I hope," I replied as we gently shook hands.

"Of course, silly," Charlie chimed in with a bright smile. "He's probably tired of hearing me say how much I love you."

I returned her smile, feeling my chest warm at her ability to always gas me up.

"Charlie, Jordana, I'd like you to meet my cousin, Elijah," Dane said.

I looked over at the man standing next to him.

Like Dane, Elijah possessed espresso brown skin. He had a low cut beard, full lips, a broad nose, and something I found quite different yet cute was the nose piercing he had. Him and Dane definitely looked alike. The only major difference was their eyes. While Dane's were dark brown, Elijah's were hazel. They were quite intimidating on the first look but the more I gazed into them, the more I found myself warming up to them.

Elijah greeted Charlie and I and I noticed the way his eyes lingered on me a little longer than my cousin.

"Is it okay if we dine with you both tonight?" Elijah asked. "I just don't think I'll be able to enjoy my food tonight without having you two beauties in our company."

He was quite charming and of course Charlie and I didn't have it in us to reject his offer. So, the four of us entered one booth with Charlie and I sitting in the middle, Dane next to her and Elijah next to me. Moments later, an attractive mocha skinned male waiter came round to collect our orders and tell Charlie that her signature drink was on the way. It suddenly looked like the four of us were on a double date and I couldn't lie, fear clawed through me.

During our uber ride, I'd been on edge thinking about laying eyes on Genesis tonight. I'd suppressed my nerves as best as I could but as soon as we'd stepped inside his restaurant, the nerves were back. Now I was on

edge thinking about the fact that Genesis could walk in at any moment and come to our table. I had no doubt in my mind that he would be here tonight to make sure that Charlie liked her drink.

And now here he stood.

Looking too damn good for his own good and watching me with a blank stare that I wasn't able to read even if I tried. And that's what made my heart drop.

You're working yourself up over nothing. He doesn't even care that you're acting like you don't know him.

I was shocked by the way I'd easily told him that it was nice to meet him. I'd swallowed courage by the glassful, letting the words slip through my lips because of my fear of Charlie finding out the truth. This wasn't how I wanted her to find out about me fucking her business associate. Not now. Not like this.

Elijah calling for the waiter and ordering me another lemon drop, allowed me to focus on him rather than Genesis. I knew Elijah was feeling me because of the way those hazel eyes of his refused to stop looking at me and now he'd kissed my hand, telling me everything that I needed to know.

He wanted me and honestly, I was considering letting him have me if it meant that I could get rid of the dangerous urge I felt to whisk Genesis away upstairs to the private dining room he'd taken me to when I'd been here last and let him fuck me all night.

But I could do no such thing.

Genesis didn't care that I was currently at his restaurant with another man and he definitely didn't care that I'd denied knowing him. His face showed no emotion and that was the confirmation I needed to know that I was tripping over nothing. This wasn't anything real. Just lust. And our time together seemed to have come to its conclusion.

I hadn't hit him up all week and he hadn't bothered to do the same. I'd started pulling away from him since our last encounter but I'd definitely thought about him all week. I'd definitely… missed him. Missed talking to him, feeling his arms around me, feeling his lips on mine and most importantly, I'd missed the D. But that was now irrelevant. Genesis didn't care about me and I needed to follow suit by no longer caring about him.

"I'll be back later on to find out how you find your drink, CC," Genesis announced, while looking at Charlie. "I hope y'all enjoy your meal."

"Thank you, Gene," Charlie said.

“Appreciate you, G,” Dane voiced. “You should come join us if you ain’t busy.”

My heart skipped a beat and I watched the way he eyed everyone else before his eyes finally landed on me. They pierced deep into me, making me feel like I was the only person in the room who had no choice but to surrender to his gaze.

“I’ll see what I can do,” he replied, his lips lifted into a graceful smile as he looked over at Dane.

A coldness crept up my spine as I realized he’d finally shown emotion but it wasn’t toward me.

He then left our table and the four of us were back to engaging in our conversations. Charlie and Dane were getting along well and looking quite close as they talked. They weren’t even touching each other and yet their chemistry was undeniable. They both had a glow on their faces as they spoke to one another and neither of them could stop smiling at each other.

Oh, they definitely like each other.

I still had my reservations about Dane crushing on my cousin but I couldn’t lie, the more I witnessed how happy he made her, the more I was slowly warming up to the idea of them being together.

As for Elijah and I? He spoke while I listened. I was too caught up in my own personal thoughts to care for what he was saying but I occasionally nodded and tried to look as interested as I possibly could.

One thing I quickly realized was just how much Elijah loved talking about himself. He’d barely asked me questions about myself. Everything was about him. What he did for a living, how successful he was, where he’d grown up etc. Truthfully, I was turned all the way off but I only pretended to be interested because I wasn’t trying to interrupt what Charlie and Dane had going on.

When my lemon drop came I wanted to shoutout and thank the Lord above that I finally had some more tequila. It would help me get through the rest of this night and this boring conversation with this self-centered man.

Eventually, our food came out and Charlie’s drink came too. She took one sip of The CC, grinned widely before continuing to take more sips, making all of us laugh at her eagerness to drink. Clearly she liked the drink which I had no doubt that she would.

She let me take a sip from her almost empty glass and the fresh and fruity cocktail instantly fired up my taste buds. It was sweet and strong, just

how Charlie loved her cocktails. She quickly ordered another one after downing her first one.

We began to feast on our delicious meal and while I was keen on devouring my food, Elijah was still going on about himself.

“I’ve got investments in almost all the Fortune 500 companies, all the start-ups I put money into make me richer than ever, I’m the best at what I do you see…”

I ate while drowning him out as best as I could and all I could think was, *What a jerk.*

I couldn’t believe that I’d even entertained the idea of heading home with Elijah tonight.

You wanted to make Genesis jealous. Ha! Now the joke’s on you cause Genesis doesn’t care about you and now you’re stuck with this jerk for the rest of your time here.

About twenty minutes later, we were all done with our meal and Genesis was back in the room. He asked Charlie about her drink which she told him she loved, bringing a smile to his face. Another smile that wasn’t meant for me.

“Kaytranada’s performing in the bar room in fifteen minutes,” he told us. “If you’re down I can get the four of you a booth.”

GW Eleven was packed full tonight. When Charlie and I had arrived, we walked past a long line outside the entrance. Luckily, Charlie’s name held weight so us having to wait in that long ass line was unnecessary. Every table in the main restaurant was occupied like it had been on my first visit but there seemed to be an endless amount of people in attendance tonight.

Clearly Kaytranada’s performance had attracted a lot of people tonight. But not only were they here to enjoy his music, they were here to get some of the best food in the city.

“Isn’t the bar room over capacity?” Elijah asked. “I saw hella bodies moving in there when I got up to use the restroom earlier. I wouldn’t want to be part of a health code violation.”

“Oh honey, clearly you didn’t enter the room,” Charlie chimed in. “With how big it is, it could never get overcapacity.”

That managed to shut Elijah up and it wasn’t long till Charlie was saying how she wanted to go to Kaytranada’s DJ set. I knew leaving wasn’t

an option because Charlie wouldn't be happy with me so I nodded in agreement.

"Yeah we're all down," Dane voiced. "You gon' be joining us?"

"Yeah," Genesis confirmed. "Just for a little bit."

Our bill was delivered to our table a few seconds later and Charlie reached for her Chanel purse behind her. As soon as she bought out her Amex card, Dane slapped it down and Charlie's eyes shot up to look at him. He had a look of disgust as he stared down at her card.

"D…" She called out to him with a shy look.

"Put it away before I snap it into two, Charlotte," he ordered, sliding his Amex card across the round table to the waiter who was waiting for a payment card.

"Thank you, Dane," she cooed, leaning in to peck his cheek which made his lips curl into a small smile.

"Anything for you, CC."

They were too stinking cute to watch and I could feel my doubts about Dane not being right for my cousin quickly slipping away. Dane was a real one, something that Elijah clearly wasn't because he'd kept silent the whole time Dane paid for our bill.

I thanked Dane for covering our bill, looked over at Genesis to see him muttering a few words to our waiter and patting his back. One thing he never failed to do was compliment his employees on their hard work. I'd seen him do it when I first visited GW Eleven and now I was seeing him do it again. He was such an impressive boss and I loved how uplifting he was to his employees. It showed how much he truly cared about them. How much he valued them.

Minutes later we got our things and followed Genesis as he led the way to the bar room. Like the main restaurant, the bar room was stunning and I couldn't stop marveling at the lavish space. There were various high tables in the center of the dimly lit room, round booths along the walls and a bar area with endless rows of alcohol on lighted floating shelves. Every single seat in the room was filled except the booth that Genesis had led us to. It was a booth right next to the stage that had been set up for Kaytranada.

"G, every seat in here is gone. How the hell you still got this one available?"

"This is the booth I leave reserved for me whenever I'm here," he explained to Dane. "Consider it a small gift from me for the night."

“We really do appreciate it, man,” Dane thanked him while patting his back.

“Thank you so much, Gene,” Charlie thanked him too.

“Yeah, thank you,” I said after her.

Genesis nodded without looking my way and my stomach hardened.

We then took our seats. Charlie and I sat in the middle with Dane sitting next to her and Elijah sitting beside me. The only person not sitting was Genesis.

His dark eyes locked on mine and my heart wouldn’t stop pounding. Even under the dim lights I still could see that attractive face of his clear as day but what I couldn’t see clearly was how he was truly feeling.

“I’ll be back in a few minutes,” he voiced in a tone so low that if I hadn’t been listening carefully I would’ve missed what he’d said.

Then he was gone. Leaving the four of us alone once again.

A waiter came to our table to collect our drink orders and we all pretty much settled on doing tequila shots for the rest of the night. And by the time our tequila shots had arrived at the table, Genesis still wasn’t back. Making me feel empty inside and at this point all I wanted was tequila filling my insides until I could no longer think about a man who clearly didn’t care about me.

We each took two tequila shots back-to-back and I smiled after each one, glad that I’d taken my remedy for the night.

Within seconds, Kaytranada came out and went behind the large table that had all his equipment laid out. People in the room started cheering at his arrival and he smiled, gave everyone a quick wave before clicking away on his laptop.

When he played the first upbeat track, people got out of their seats to dance and turn up. The four of us got out of our seats and headed to the dance floor in front of Kaytranada’s DJ booth.

The room basically turned into a night club and excitement buzzed around the room as Kaytranada played his greatest hits. I was a fan of his music so I knew the songs being played, making this night ten times better for me.

Charlie and I danced together occasionally but Elijah kept coming behind me, trying to dance with me. The tequila had me feeling nice so I danced with him for a short while before moving away to do my own thing.

Charlie and Dane had become quite close on the dance floor and I wasn't trying to ruin their moment together. But even as I tried to dance alone, Elijah wouldn't let up and continued to follow me around on the dance floor like one lost, little puppy.

I decided to leave the dance floor to head back to my seat in need of a break. As soon as I was back in my seat, Charlie was rushing back to our booth with concern etched into her pretty features.

"J, everything okay?" She sat down next to me.

"Yeah," I said. "I just needed a little break."

"I feel you." She nodded. "More shots?"

The smile that creased my face told her my answer to her question and she immediately returned my smile before looking over at Dane and Elijah who had arrived back at our table.

"Everything okay?" Dane asked.

"Yes," Charlie said. "Dane, we want more shots please."

"A'ight." He obediently nodded. "I'll be right back. Eli, let's go."

When they were gone, I was onto Charlie like white on rice.

"You like him," I told her with a knowing look.

"J… he's just a friend."

"A friend that you want dicking you down," I said, causing her to chortle.

"What?" I too laughed. "Did I lie?"

Like me, Charlie had a golden beige complexion so she couldn't hide the redness in her cheeks as she blushed even if she tried.

"You like himmmmm," I sang, bobbing my head to the lively song playing. "You like himmmmm!"

"Okay, okay… maybe I do."

"I fucking knew it!"

"Shhhhh," she hushed me, bringing a finger to my lips. "It's a secret. You can't tell nobody. Nobodyyyyy."

I nodded innocently.

"Swear to me, J."

"I swear," I told her once she'd lifted her finger from my lips.

"Pinky promise?" She asked, lifting her pinky between us both.

"Pinky promiseeeeee." I joined my pinky to hers and when we started giggling uncontrollably, I knew right then and there that we were both tipsy.

Dane and Elijah arrived back at our table. Dane held a tray of four shots and both Charlie and I looked at each other with a frown on both our faces.

“Where’s the rest of the shots, Daney?”

“This is your last one for the night, ladies,” he affirmed, giving us both a serious look.

“Last one?” Charlie queried, confusion heavy in her voice. “Uh-uh, we’re just getting started, baby.”

“Come on, cuz. Let the ladies turn up as much as they want tonight,” Elijah chimed in while taking his seat next to me.

“Yeah! Let us turn up tonight,” Charlie insisted.

He sternly shook his head. “Last one, CC.”

“Boooooo!” she yelled, grabbing a shot and a lemon wedge from the black tray. “You’re no fun, Daney.”

He definitely wasn’t any fun but I couldn’t help but appreciate the fact that he cared about me and Charlie’s wellbeing tonight. He wasn’t going to allow us to get too drunk tonight and it showed how much he cared about us.

Unlike some.

I’d done a pretty good job of pushing Genesis to the back of my mind while dancing the night away but now that I was sitting down, he was the only person I could see in my head.

I’d scanned the room many times trying to catch a glimpse of him but to no avail. He’d completely disappeared.

“Bottoms up, J!” Charlie yelled in my ear while we both held our shots.

The guys had reached for their shots too. All four of us then toasted and took our final shot of the night. The minute the burn from the tequila eased down my throat, Genesis appeared out of nowhere and the burn went rushing to every part of my body.

“G! There you are,” Dane announced.

He nodded before saying, “My bad for disappearing. Y’all having fun?”

“Yesssss,” Charlie responded excitedly. “Come sit and turn up with us, Gene. I feel like I haven’t seen you all night.”

“So, when am I gonna have the chance to dance with you again, beautiful,” a deep voice whispered in my ear and I reluctantly turned to the voice.

Seeing the grin on Elijah’s lips made a quiver form in my stomach but I tried to suppress it as best as I could.

“I’m not really in a dancing mood right now,” I simply said, turning away from him to see Genesis now sitting close at the edge of our booth.

He glanced at me for only about three seconds before focusing his attention on Dane who was talking to him about something that I couldn’t hear because of the voice back in my ear.

“But I wanna dance with you now, baby girl,” Elijah said. “Come on, let’s go. Just you and me.”

I felt a hand on my thigh and my muscles tensed.

“I said I’m not in the mood.” I tried to remove his hand but he gripped my thigh, making me tense up even more. “Please let me go.”

“But I want yo—”

“Get your hands off her.”

Adrenaline kicked my heart into overdrive and I wasn’t able to stop myself from looking over at the man that had dominated my thoughts all night.

“Yo, Genesis, this ain’t got nothing to do with y—”

“I ain’t gonna ask you again. Get your fucking hands off her. *Now* .”

Everyone was looking at Genesis as he spoke and I’m sure everyone was as shocked as I was at not only at what he’d said but the way his jaw was now twitching and the coldness in his eyes. It was like something inside him had suddenly unleashed and it had no desire to be caged up.

Elijah let me go but just because he’d stopped touching me, that didn’t stop him from trying to check Genesis.

“I don’t appreciate you trying to interrupt my private conversation with Jordana.”

“I could give a flying fuck about your shitty conversation,” he snapped. “The lady asked you to let her go and you weren’t listening.”

Damn, he was actually paying attention to me?

“Clearly you must’ve bumped your head tonight or decided not to take your medication but let’s be clear, when a woman says no, that really does mean no. Touch her again and see what the fuck happens.”

“Man, fuck you, Genesis. Don’t be getting involved in shit that ain’t got nothing to do with you, nigga.”

“Elijah, chill,” Dane intervened, shooting daggers at his cousin. “You were in the wrong. Let it go.”

“No, I ain’t about to let it go, man. Fuck that nigga.”

Genesis let out a light laugh with not one ounce of amusement on his face.

“What’s so damn funny?” Elijah queried.

“*You* ,” Genesis calmly told him. “I’m the wrong nigga to mess with but keep on trying me if you want to ‘cause I promise you, I’ll be the one to put you right where you belong, fool.”

Elijah got up from his seat and as soon as he did, so did Dane. “Yo, who the hell are you calling fool?”

“Eli, stop.”

“Nah, I ain—”

“Sit the fuck down and shut the fuck up before you get yourself hurt, *fool* ,” Genesis ordered. “I ain’t afraid to fuck you up in front of all these people. Believe that.”

“So do it, Mr. Big Talk. We both know you can’t do shit to me with your scary ass.”

Genesis suddenly jumped out of his seat and that was all it took for me to say something.

“Genesis, please! Don’t.”

I could see that deadly look in his eyes that told me he was with all the shits and I just knew he didn’t give a fuck about beating up Elijah right here in front of all these people. I wasn’t trying to have him embarrass himself in his high-class establishment even though he seemed like he was willing to risk it all. Thankfully, my words stopped him right in his tracks and his heated gaze landed on me.

“Get up, Jordana,” he demanded after sitting back down. “You ain’t sitting next to that nigga no more.”

Without hesitating I got up from my seat but Elijah who was still standing, blocked my way and reached for my arm.

“Baby girl, where you goin...”

That was all it took for Genesis to leap out of his seat, come on the other side of our booth, grip Elijah’s neck, and slam him down to our table.

“G!” Dane yelled.

“Gene, stop!” Charlie pleaded.

I was in too much shock to say anything. All I could do was watch on as Genesis choked the hell out of Elijah.

“What the fuck did I tell you about putting your hands on her?”

Elijah's face had turned pale and his lips trembled as he looked up at Genesis who had him rooted to the table.

"L-Le… Let me… g-go," Elijah choked out and tried to grab hold of Genesis's hand that was wrapped around his neck but Genesis slapped them away like they were nothing but a nuisance to him.

It was clear that Elijah's bark had been worse than his actual bite. He was all talk and no action and now Genesis had come along to show him that he really wanted all the smoke.

"You put your filthy fucking hands on a woman that doesn't belong to you. I should smoke your ass right here."

"Genesis, please," I begged him. "Let him go."

He turned to me while keeping a firm hold on Elijah who was struggling for air. But Genesis didn't seem to care. His face was emotionless as he squeezed tighter on Elijah's neck. Both scaring the shit out of me and causing a thrill of danger to spiral through me. I cursed myself internally for getting turned on right now. This wasn't the time for me to be craving Genesis and yet I craved him so bad that it hurt.

"He touched you, love," he told me in a gentle tone, as if it was just a normal night and he didn't have a nigga pinned down to our table right now. "We both know he ain't allowed to do that shit."

"Genesis, this ain't the night to kill my cousin. Please, man," Dane chimed in.

Genesis was quiet for a few seconds, staring down at Elijah with a blank look.

"I want him out my shit. He's no longer welcome here."

"Alright, whatever you want," Dane agreed. "Just let him go."

Genesis then lifted Elijah off the table before dashing him to the floor. Causing Elijah to cough and gasp for air while rubbing on his neck.

Surprise at what Genesis had done to Elijah had clearly knocked my awareness of our surroundings out the window because it was only now that I realized that two security guards had arrived at our table.

"Take him out," Genesis ordered and the men did as he said, picking Elijah off the floor and taking him away.

"Let me make sure his dumb ass gets in an uber home," Dane reluctantly said before quickly following after his cousin and the security guards.

Once they was gone, Genesis took the seat next to mine and lifted his hand out toward me. Despite all that had just gone down, I didn't have it in me to not reach for his hand and when our hands joined, he pulled me onto his lap. He wrapped his arm around my waist from the back, keeping me close to him.

Charlie was now looking at the both of us with a wide-eyed stare but remained speechless. I too was at a loss for words but it only lasted for a split second because of what Genesis said next.

"You pretended not to know me earlier, Jordana." My name falling from his lips made fire streak between my thighs. "I let that shit slide before but I ain't letting it slide no more. Go ahead and tell your cousin who's been dicking you down these past couple weeks."

Charlie's bottom lip fell, opening her mouth. "W-What?"

I took in a deep breath before saying, "Genesis and I… already met a few weeks ago, CC."

"A few weeks ago? Bitch, why didn't you tell me?"

"I didn't know how to," I admitted. "I was afraid you'd hate me for messing with one of your business associates."

She started looking at me like I was the craziest person ever. "J, you're my cousin and you're grown. Who you decide to start fucking ain't up to me. You should've just told me."

Now I felt like shit for keeping my situation with Genesis a secret away from her and I could see it in her eyes that she was hurt by what I'd done. We were cousins yes but we were also best friends and here I was, keeping secrets. Though we'd never actually come out and said we were besties, we both knew what was up between us.

"I'm sorry, CC. Please forgive me."

"Of course I do," she replied with a small smile. "Just don't keep secrets from me like that ever again, J. We don't do that. That's not us."

It wasn't and I knew for sure that I couldn't keep a secret like that again from her.

Dane then came back to our table and took his place beside Charlie. Within an instant, she moved closer to him, angling her body toward his and he did the exact same to her.

"Your crazy ass," Dane said while shaking his head at Genesis.

"I warned him."

“You did, you did,” Dane agreed. “I’m sure he’s learned his lesson now. Jordana, I apologize on behalf of my stupid ass cousin. He shouldn’t have touched you at all.”

I thanked him for his apology, glad that he was the smart one out of him and his creepy cousin.

“Daney, let’s go dance,” Charlie requested moments later and he didn’t hesitate to grab her hand and lead her to the dance floor.

Once they were gone, it was just Genesis and I. I was still sitting on his lap and I could feel his bulge growing underneath me as I sat on top of him. Our hands were still joined and as much as I was enjoying being this close to him, I wasn’t sure if it was a good idea after all that had happened tonight. But still I remained put on his lap, staring at him intently.

“You shouldn’t have done that to Elijah, Genesis.”

“You shouldn’t have been anywhere near him in the first place, Jordana,” he countered, tightening his arm around my waist. “That nigga shouldn’t have uttered one damn word to you and he most definitely shouldn’t have touched you.”

“He showed me more attention than I’ve gotten from you all night,” I muttered in a tone loud enough for him to catch and I turned away to stare at the energetic crowd on the dance floor.

He let go of my hand only to reach for my chin and turn my head back in his direction. When our eyes locked, a surge of electricity ran through my veins.

“You were the one that pretended not to know me,” he reminded me of my earlier sin. “How do you think that made me feel?”

“You didn’t seem to care.”

“Because you were buddied up with that whack ass nigga, making me jealous as fuck that you were in his face when you should’ve been in mine.”

He then leaned in and pressed his thick lips to mine, giving us both the connection we’d been needing all night. Wetness leaked out of me as his tongue worked mine and when he started sucking on my tongue while we kissed, I wasn’t able to stop the moans that fell from my mouth. The tequila I’d drank earlier was still racing through me and the more our tongues collided, the more I found myself feeling overwhelmed with lust.

“I’ve missed you,” he said after tonguing me down. “I’ve missed talking you… I’ve missed kissing you… I’ve missed hearing you moan my name.”

My pussy was now throbbing for him in the worst way and I continued to look at him while biting my bottom lip.

“I’ve missed you sitting on my face… squirting all over me… letting me nut all over that pretty face of yours.”

He must want me to fuck him in the front of all these people.

“I had to stay away from you tonight because all I wanted to do was snatch you away from that fool, Jordana. I couldn’t stand seeing you get friendly with a man that isn’t me.”

I was only growing hotter and hotter by the second and at this point, I was willing to take my panties off and fuck him right now in this booth. Not giving a damn about who was around.

“And we both know that this is just sex but I don’t want you fucking anyone else right now but me.”

“Is that your cute little way of saying you only want this pussy to yourself?”

He smirked before admitting, “Yes.”

He’d finally shown me the emotion I’d been craving to see from him all night. He’d finally admitted what I’d been needing to hear him say for a long time. He only wanted me and I only wanted him too. I was done playing myself and done pretending not to care. I was done being afraid of getting attached. This was only sex at the end of the day and I was a big girl. I could detach myself from him when this was all said and done, right? We were just having sex and we only wanted to have sex with each other. We’d made that much clearer now and I couldn’t lie, I was turned all the way on by him making it certain that he only wanted me.

“Let’s get out of here,” I whispered to him. “I can’t take it anymore… I’ve missed you so much and I need you inside me, baby. Please… I need you to slut me out.” I licked up his ear lobe before biting it gently, causing a groan to slip from his lips. “Take us home and fuck me in whatever position you like.”

“Jordana,” he whispered my name and I smiled at him with a smile so big you would’ve thought I’d become the ambassador of smiling.

“Any hole you like too… my pussy… my mouth… my ass.”

He released strained breaths while gazing deeply into my eyes. He was staring at me like he wanted to eat me up for dessert and I was more than ready to let him do that.

“I’m all yours, Gene.”

“That better not be the tequila making you say shit you don’t mean, Dana.”

“It’s not. I mean every word,” I affirmed. “I want you so bad, Gene… Please, fuck me.”

He didn’t say a word but the hunger that blazed in his eyes told me all I needed to know. He was more than willing to give me every part of him tonight.

The next few minutes happened so fast to me that they were quite a blur and I knew I had no one to blame but the tequila coursing through my veins. One minute I was saying goodbye to Charlie and Dane on the dance floor then Genesis was leading me out the bar room.

We stopped by the coat check to collect my coat before heading out to the employee parking lot where Genesis’s Bentley was.

He made sure I was seated comfortably on the leather seat and strapped me in like a true gentleman. Before he left my side, I grabbed his face, pulled him close to me and tongued him down seductively.

“God damn it, Dana,” he growled after pulling away from my lips seconds into our sloppy kiss. “You’re being so fucking nasty… you about to make me nut in my pants.”

I flashed him a devilish smile and watched the way he started shaking his head at me like I was crazy.

Moments later, he’d shut my passenger door and was right by my side, pulling out the parking lot and racing home.

He’d put on the purple interior lighting of his Bentley, making my lustful mood heighten. He told me to connect my phone to his Bentley’s Apple CarPlay and I did before selecting my personal playlist that I loved to play while I played with myself. And while the sultry vocals of Jhené Aiko played in the background, I wasn’t able to stop my hands from stroking my exposed thighs.

I’d decided to wear one of the shortest dresses in my closet tonight and while I sat next to Genesis it’d hiked up, providing me with easy access to touch on myself. And touch on myself I did which Genesis immediately noticed in his peripheral.

Here he was speeding away on the streets while I now touched myself with nobody in mind but him. He would occasionally glance at me, his hooded eyes burning with passion the more he observed my hands rubbing on my body.

“Dana, we’re almost home,” he told me in a strained tone while his gaze remained focused on the streets ahead.

“But Gene… I’m so wet,” I whispered, placing a hand between my open thighs to cup my soft middle, and feeling how soaked my thong was.

“Just hold o… fuck,” he cursed and I kept my eyes sealed on his while rubbing on my pussy.

There was no missing the frustration he housed on his handsome face and seeing it only encouraged me to keep playing with myself further.

“You tryna make me crash this car, Jordana? Stop playing with your pussy without me.”

I ignored him and spread my thighs wider as I pulled my thong down my legs.

“Jordana…”

Then I slipped two fingers into my tightness and I instantly moaned at the entry.

“Dana, p-please,” he begged but I refused to listen and continued to rock my fingers back and forth.

His eyes would constantly bounce to the road ahead then back on me. It was evident from the way he kept looking over at me fingering myself that he didn’t give a damn about driving. It was just something he had to do to get us to our final destination. And I knew I should’ve just been patient until we arrived at his apartment but I couldn’t help how I felt. I was so hot and bothered and sitting next to him in this lush car while Jhené Aiko’s *On The Way* blasted through the speakers was only making my want for this sexy man stronger.

“Mmmh… I wish you were inside of me right now, Genesis… instead of my fingers,” I moaned while fucking myself slow and that was all it took for Genesis to pull over to the side of the road we were on and kill the engine.

He leaned over the center console to reach for the back of my neck and crashed his lips to mine. This time I wasn’t the one in control of our kiss and I was left in awe at the way his tongue possessed my mouth.

While he kissed me, he reached for the hand that was buried between my thighs and pulled my fingers out of me. Then he broke our kiss, brought my fingers to his lips, and sucked my juices off my skin.

“Go… to… the… back seat,” he announced between his sucks and I obediently nodded, my head becoming so clouded with lust that I was

lowkey afraid I might pass out from how intense it was.

He got out of the car first to come round to my side and open the door for me. And when we were both in the back seat of his Bentley seconds later, Genesis wasted no time in stripping me from my coat, my dress, and my thong. The only thing he let me keep on were my Louboutins which was no surprise because I knew how much he loved fucking me with my heels on. I too stripped him naked, anxious to lay eyes on that sculpted physique of his that I'd missed dearly. And when I laid eyes on that perfect body of his, my mouth became moist and the wetness that poured out between my legs increased.

Foreplay wasn't necessary because I'd been feining for this man all night, all week in fact but still he toyed with me. He sucked on my titties, my pussy and anywhere else on my body that he felt needed some loving. I would try to stroke on his dick while he pleased me but he pushed my hands away, much to my dismay.

"Gene, I wanna touch you."

"No," he snapped, biting hard into my nipples, causing me to whimper. "I told you to stop playing with your pussy without me and you didn't listen. Now I gotta teach you a lesson for teasing me."

And a lesson he did teach. I was told to get on all fours on the backseat then the next thing I knew he was entering my wet slit from the back while keeping a tight hold on my waist.

"Genesisahhhhh!"

"I'm slutting you all the way out tonight… just like you wanted, baby," he groaned. "Best believe you're getting every inch of this dick, all mothafucking night, Jordana."

All I could do was moan and cry out in response as he thrusted in and out of me. We were propped up on the back seat with his body draped over mine while he gave me relentless back shots.

I guess you could say the tequila had me feeling brave because I quickly arched my back to meet his thrusts, trying to fuck him back. My actions caused moans to erupt out of him and I smiled to myself hearing them. His moans only encouraged me to keep going and I began to twerk my ass cheeks up and down his dick which heightened his moans. I also began to tease him by telling him how weak this pussy had him feeling, how I had him moaning for me like he was my bitch and how he was quickly becoming my slut for the night.

“Fuuuuck… I see what’s going,” he said seconds after my taunts. “You think you running shit tonight, huh?”

I felt his hand press against my back and I was pushed down, causing my breasts to push against the leather seats. He slowly pulled out of me, inch by inch, making me whimper at the feeling of him leaving my body. I suddenly felt empty without him inside me.

“You think you running shit, Dana?”

I nodded, knowing my lack of speech would provoke him further and provoke him it did because I heard him shift behind me, raise my thighs off the seats so I was arching once again then his lips suddenly pressed to my back passage. He slipped his tongue in my ass and I hissed at the sensation of his tongue entering me. The sensation traveled through my entire body and I began to feel dizzy because of how powerful it was.

His tongue was ruthless. He pushed it in and out my tightness, making me cry out like one maniac who couldn’t get a hold of herself. And get a hold of myself I couldn’t seem to do because not only could I not keep my mouth shut, but I also couldn’t keep my body still either.

In and out his talented tongue worked my slit and the pleasure tearing through me was so deep and intense that it left me dazed and trembling. His fingers joined the party and he hit me with the deadly combo of fucking my ass with his tongue while his two fingers fucked my pussy.

Moments later, his tongue slipped out of me and his fingers pulled out of me but the pounding in my heart refused to subside. The ache I had for him didn’t ease down. He’d only gotten me riled me up for so much more of him which was exactly what I knew he’d wanted to do in the first place.

“You don’t run shit tonight, sweetheart,” he whispered. “This is all me. You’re the one getting slutted out.”

He gave one last lick to my ass that caused me to shudder and it wasn’t long till I was pushed back down to the leather seats. Once again he slid his thickness inside me and we both moaned at how great it felt for him to be back where he belonged.

“You’re the one that belongs to me.”

While he rode me from behind, one of his hands slipped from my waist and traveled down my stomach so he could stroke my clit, making me go insane. I could no longer think straight or breathe normally and I had no one to thank but him.

This was officially the best sex of my life. Back shots in the back of his Bentley and getting my ass ate had been the last thing I'd been expecting to get tonight but now that I was getting them, I never wanted to stop having them. And deep down I knew, I never wanted to stop having him.

How I was going to be able to walk away from this man when our time together was over, I had no clue. No damn clue at all!

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genesis

I FELT my breath rush out of me as she carefully took me into her mouth, inch by inch. I currently stood by the side of my bed while she lay on her back with her head hanging off the bed, tilted backward as she deep throated me. Her hands were holding on to my thighs for support and those angelic brown eyes of hers were locked on mine. The irony of her having angelic eyes when she was doing the nastiest shit to me right now.

I was still in awe at her not having a gag reflex because it allowed me to marvel at the sight of her taking every inch of my dick down her throat.

"You are so fucking nasty," I whispered with ragged breaths falling out of me as her head moved back and forth.

I crouched down so I could reach for her breasts and play with them while she played with me.

A new day had arrived and even after all the sex we'd had in my car last night, all the sex we'd had when we arrived at my apartment, we still couldn't get enough of each other.

Yesterday night had been… *eventful* .

I'd already had a strong hunch that I would be laying hands on Elijah and lo and behold, that's exactly what I'd done. I didn't give a fuck about making a scene in my restaurant. I owned the place so if I decided that I wanted to make a scene then that's exactly what was going to happen. I'd be the nigga yelling out *"Lights, Camera, Action!"* just to make it clear that I wasn't the one to play with.

Elijah had been out of line touching Jordana when she'd asked him not to but most of all he was out of his mind thinking that he had a chance with her. That was all dead now and I was certain that he knew that she was off

limits. And if he didn't know, I would have no choice but to make good on my promise of smoking his ass.

What could I say other than I truly was my father's son? He hadn't become the biggest kingpin in Houston by being nice. He was a killer, through and through and although I'd never seen him kill anyone, I'd heard the way he spoke about lives that he didn't care about. Like they were worthless, disposable and most importantly, replaceable.

I always used to wonder how he slept at night knowing he had blood on his hands… knowing that he was a cold-blooded killer. But the day I'd taken a life to protect the one woman I'd die for in a heartbeat and the little boy I saw as not only my nephew but my son too, was the day I learned just how my father slept at night knowing he was killer.

"All of this for little old me?" Jordana's soft voice pulled me away from my thoughts. "Thank you, Gene."

An hour later, we had both cleaned up and left the bedroom. She looked up at me, puckered up her lips and I lowered my head, allowing me to give her a sweet peck. Then I pulled away and saw the happy smile on her face.

I took my seat then reached for her hand before leading our grace. After our prayer, she picked up her fork and began to dig into the breakfast I'd whipped up for her this morning.

Naturally, I was an early riser so getting up early wasn't uncommon for me. As soon as I'd woken up to see Jordana sleeping peacefully beside me, my heart felt at ease. Everything about her in my bed looked and felt right. And I knew I'd be the biggest fool to ever deny it.

I'd gotten the idea to cook her breakfast in bed but decided that I needed to get cleaned up first before chefing it up in my kitchen. After showering, I headed back to my bedroom only for warmth to spread throughout my chest at the beauty now wide awake. I'd only come out in a towel so seeing the way her eyes couldn't stop sweeping up and down my body was no surprise. And despite my silk sheets shielding her body, I wasn't able to stop myself from ogling her. That was what led to Jordana's head hanging off the side of my bed while she deep throated all of me.

Now here we were. Sitting side by side on the bar stools of my kitchen island as we feasted on the breakfast I'd made. I'd made pancakes, eggs, and bacon.

She was currently too busy devouring her meal to notice me stealing quick glances at her. I couldn't help but stare. She was rocking my hoodie

and basketball shorts and even though it looked big as hell on her, she still looked good in my shit. And I was lowkey jealous that it was looking much better on her than me.

While she'd showered, I'd cooked breakfast and when she came out in my clothes minutes later, I couldn't stop smiling at her wearing my clothes. I also loved the fact that she felt comfortable enough to raid my closet.

Eventually Jordana caught me staring and when our eyes connected, her lips lifted into a smirk.

"I know, I know," she spoke after swallowing the food in her mouth. "I'm eating like a pig right now. But I can't help it. The food is bomb."

She was in fact not eating like a pig but like a woman who greatly appreciated the food that had been prepared for her. I loved how she wasn't afraid to eat a whole plate of food in front of me.

"I'm glad you're enjoying it," I replied before placing a few pieces of egg into my mouth.

"I really enjoyed you last night, Gene."

I quickly chewed and swallowed before turning to face her with a smirk.

"Oh, you did, huh?"

She nodded and I slid my hand onto her thigh then squeezed it tight.

"I really did," she said.

Memories of what we'd done last night flew into my head. I'd been so desperate for her that I hadn't been able to wait until we arrived at my apartment to touch her. Pulling over on the side of the road was the only thing that made sense to me and giving her back shots in the back of my Bentley had officially topped all the sex we'd had so far. All the sex I'd ever had in this life was nothing in comparison to the sex I was having with Jordana.

"I enjoyed you too, sweetheart," I replied. "Too damn much."

She bit her lip hard around the smile that tugged at her mouth.

"And I want to keep on enjoying you for as long as you allow me to."

She leaned in closer toward me until our lips were almost touching.

"Okay."

"If at any moment you decide you want to end things, let me know, Dana. Don't shut me out."

She stared at me intently.

"You already lied to me once about being busy. I don't want you doing that shit again. Just keep it real with me. A'ight?"

“A’ight,” she replied in a deep voice, clearly mocking me and I wasn’t able to stop the grin that creased my face.

We kissed for a few seconds before resuming our meal. While we ate, conversation naturally flowed between us and I decided to ask Jordana about her relationship with Charlie.

“I noticed how close you two were last night. Have you two always been so close?”

“Yeah, we have. She’s younger than me by only two years so we’ve always been able to relate. I love being around her and luckily for me, she loves being around me too.”

“Luckily for you?” I arched a brow at her. “You’re talking like it’s a bad thing to be around you when it’s not. Of course, she loves being around you. You’re a great listener, sweet and outgoing. Anyone that doesn’t love being around you is dumb as hell.”

She immediately blushed and thanked me for the compliment.

“It’s nothing, love. I’m just speaking the truth. You’re a great person to be around… and how could I ever forget how nasty you get with some liquor inside you?”

She giggled and I licked my lips at the memory of her licking on my ear at the bar last night. Now I could feel my arousal for her growing and I knew I needed to chill.

You had plenty of her last night and this morning, nigga. Re-fucking-lax.

“I really admire how tight you both are,” I said, getting back on track to our conversation about her and Charlie. “You’re blessed to have one another.”

“Thank you, baby.”

My heart swelled at her calling me baby. I swear every time she called me that, I was more and more tempted to put a baby in her.

“Hearing you say that really means a lot to me. She’s helped me get through some of my darkest days and I’m forever grateful for her.”

I wanted to pry and find out exactly what had happened to her in her darkest days but I quickly decided against it. I wasn’t trying to make her feel uncomfortable and I had a feeling that asking about her past would do exactly that.

We talked some more and after breakfast, we were back in my bed, cuddling while talking and basking in the presence of one another.

I knew she had to head back home soon because today was a Sunday which meant she had her family supper with her mother and three brothers. I didn't want her to go and while I held her in my arms, I was reminded of just how smitten I'd gotten with having her in my home. But all good things had to come to an end eventually and I didn't protest when she said, "Gene… I gotta head home now."

I nodded and told her to give me a minute to put on my shoes. She tried to protest me taking her home, insisting she could take an Uber but when I gave her a look that said, *'You know damn well I'm taking you home,'* she decided to stop playing and let me take care of her.

During the drive to her home, I kept one hand rooted to her thigh while my other hand worked the steering wheel. She placed a hand on the back of my neck, stroking my nape and occasionally rubbing on my beard. We didn't even talk for most of the drive but we didn't have to. Our hands did more than enough talking. Our hands gave voice to the thoughts that we didn't dare say… well mine certainly did as I gripped and stroked on her thick thighs.

I want you. Only you. From here on out, Jordana. I want to be with you. I want you to be my girl.

I knew better than saying those words out loud though. I couldn't want more from my situation with Jordana. We were just fucking. She knew that and I knew that. There were no strings attached, no feelings involved. She'd made that very clear from the jump and I'd gone along with it.

Like a fucking fool!

Minutes later, I arrived outside her apartment building. I left the car and jogged round it to open her door. As soon as she turned to face me, I wasted no time in branding my lips to hers. The kiss was gentle, sweet, and yet possessive. Possessive because even after all the time we'd spent together I was still so needy for her. I still wanted her in my presence, I still wanted to hear her talk to me. I didn't want her leaving me today at all and if I could have things my way, she wouldn't be going anywhere but to my arms where she could be rest assured that she'd always be protected, reassured, and comforted.

I reluctantly pulled away from her and watched her sink her teeth into her bottom lip as she gazed into my eyes.

"I'll see you soon, sweetheart," I whispered to her and she quickly nodded.

“I’ll see you soon, Gene,” she replied softly and after one last kiss, I moved out the way for her to step out my car and walk away to head to her apartment’s entrance.

I was playing with fire by making myself sexually exclusive with this woman and doing things with her that I didn’t do with just any woman when I knew this was nothing but sex. However, I didn’t care. It was what it was and I would continue to play with fire but pray deep down inside that the flames didn’t burn me too badly. I wasn’t sure if I’d be able to recover from a sting as strong as this one had the potential to be but it was what it was. She was who I wanted for now and I wasn’t about to stop being with her.

“Bottoms up, kid.”

My uncle raised his glass and I did the same. We connected our cups then lifted it to our mouths and gulped down the brown liquor. The smooth liquid burned my throat, turning my blood hot.

I’d finally taken my uncle up on his offer of me coming round to his for a drink. One thing about him, he loved his cognac and he would easily spend four figures or sometimes even five on one bottle of vintage cognac. Cognac was one of his vices and he didn’t miss the opportunity to enjoy it whenever he could.

We were in his man cave, a custom made basement that he’d had designed with all his favorite things. A pool table, a poker table, an indoor hot tub, a wet bar and a huge built in flat screen TV that we were seated in front of now.

“Ahhhh, shit,” Mathias groaned after swallowing the cognac.

I smirked. “You’re getting too old, Unc. You can’t handle your liquor no more, huh?”

“Shut it, kid. I’ve been drinking good way before you were even born.”

“Whatever you say, old man.”

He flipped me the bird before reaching for the bottle of Courvoisier that sat on the center table ahead. As he refilled our glasses, I heard footsteps coming down the stairs and it wasn’t long till an ebony skinned man appeared at the bottom of the staircase.

“Boss,” he greeted my uncle with a firm head nod.

“Corbin. Come on down.”

Corbin obeyed and approached the seating area.

“Corbin, this is my nephew, Genesis. Genesis, meet Corbin, my right hand.”

Corbin and I greeted one another and shook hands. Then Corbin was telling my uncle that what he needed done this morning had been done before quickly taking his leave. Leaving my uncle and I alone in his man cave once again.

I appreciated the fact that Corbin hadn’t disclosed any information to what he’d done for my uncle because I wasn’t trying to hear anything pertaining to my uncle’s chosen hustle. And I was also grateful that Corbin hadn’t stayed behind to chill with us. I already willingly hung around one unlawful citizen because he was blood and I really wasn’t trying to add another person to my life who indulged in a lifestyle that I didn’t agree with.

My uncle and I continued to spend time together, talk about life and drink his expensive ass cognac. The liquor definitely had me feeling some type of way because moments into our talk, I blurted out a piece of information that caught my uncle completely off guard.

“I’ve met someone.”

“So, you lied to me, kid? You do have a girlfriend.”

“Well, she’s not exactly my girlfriend… we’re just messing around.”

“And I take it from the tone in your voice that you’d like to be something more with her?”

“…Nah,” I lied. “We’re just having some fun.”

A hearty laugh erupted out of him and I looked at him like he’d suddenly grown two heads.

“I don’t recall saying anything funny, Unc.”

“Oh, believe me you did.” His laughter continued and I frowned.

“You’re just like your father…” He released one last chuckle. “… Thinking you can lie to me when you’re both so bad at it.”

I lifted a hand to the back of my neck and gently rubbed it.

“You like her. I can see it all over your face that you do.”

I did but it didn’t mean shit.

“She’s not looking for anything serious.”

“But have you tried telling her how you feel?”

“I don’t feel anything…” He sent an unimpressed look my way which told me that he wasn’t buying the garbage that had spilled from my lips and honestly, I wasn’t buying it either. “It doesn’t matter how I feel. She’s pretty set on not being in a relationship.”

“I still feel like you should tell her how you feel. She won’t know your true feelings unless you tell her.”

I immediately shook my head ‘no.’ “Telling her would be pointless because this is just sex for her and it doesn’t matter how much I like her; this is just sex for me too.”

The words I’d just said to Mathias triggered a bittersweet knot of pain inside me. I was shocked that I’d even brought up Jordana in the first place but I guess it was true what they said about a drunk mind speaking a sober heart. I was far from drunk but the cognac circulating through my system was more than enough to make me think of no one else but her.

I was catching feelings… nah, fuck that – I’d caught feelings for that woman. My mind knew it, my heart knew it and most of all my soul knew it.

She was the number one person I craved to be around every single day, the first person I thought about when I woke up and the last person I thought about before I closed my eyes at night. I’d started praying for her more than I prayed for my damn self. Praying that she had a good day, praying that she was safe whenever she wasn’t with me and praying that nothing but a smile stayed on her pretty face.

The week we’d not spoken to one another or exchanged texts had left me feeling uneasy. It was like an icy hand had curled around my heart, squeezing it tight and robbing me from the happiness that only she could provide.

There was no point of denying the truth anymore. I’d caught feelings for Jordana Evans but like I’d told my uncle, it didn’t fucking matter. This was only sex to her. Nothing more. And I’d be stupid to think that she could ever want more with me.

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jordana

A NEW WORKDAY had arrived and what had started off as a serene day for me quickly turned into a stressful one. It wasn't stressful because of my clients but because of the HBIC in charge, the one and only, Aubrey Payne.

Like a true pain in the ass, Aubrey had decided that today she was going to pick on me. Like always I was booked the whole day and had clients to tend to until closing time. Aubrey would constantly walk by my station, analyze my work, constantly comment about what she felt I needed to improve on. I really didn't appreciate the way she was talking to me and making me feel in front of my clients. The way she was talking to me was making me feel like I was a horrible hairdresser who didn't know how to style hair.

Fortunately, every single one of my clients loved the hair styles that I'd installed on them. And so did the other hairstylists in the salon. The only person that seemed to have a problem with my work was Aubrey and when closing time came around I decided to confront her about the way she'd made me feel.

I left my station and didn't bother looking at anyone else as I marched to Aubrey's office. I also didn't bother knocking on her door, I just pushed it open and barged into the room.

My eyes landed on her immediately. She was behind her desk with her phone glued to her ear but upon my intrusion, she told her caller that she would call them back then hung up the phone.

"Jorda—"

"What's the problem you have with me, Aubrey?"

She peered at me while dropping her phone to her desk.

“Problem?” She asked, folding her arms over her chest. “Who said anything about me having a problem with you?

“Your actions show that you have a problem with me, Aubrey and quite frankly, I think I’ve had enough of how you’ve been treating me.”

“I don’t have a problem with you, Jordana. I just don’t want you thinking you can become complacent with your work.”

“But I’m not complacent with my work and you know that. You’ve been picking on me all day and this isn’t the first time you’ve done this. I’m sick of you treating me like I’m some kid that doesn’t know what she’s doing. You’re supposed to be my boss and a mentor, not a bully.”

Her face tightened instantly.

“A bully? When have I ever bullied you, Jordana?”

“We both know that you pick on me any chance that you get, Aubrey, and I don’t appreciate the way you treat me or any of the girls. We’re supposed to be a team but you treat us like we’re little girls that don’t know what the hell we’re doing when we do. You make me feel worthless, like I’m not doing a good enough job and what I’m doing isn’t that important.”

“I really don’t appreciate the way you’re coming at me right now,” she replied sternly. “And now you’re speaking on behalf of the girls? If they truly have a problem with me they should be able to tell me that themselves and not have you as their spokesperson.”

“I’m just sayi—”

“I’m not finished speaking,” she cut me off, a fierce heat burning in her eyes. “I’m not a bully. Never have been and never will be. Am I sometimes a little hard on you all? Yes but that’s only because I want you all performing at the best that you can be. If you have a problem with the way I run my salon then you know exactly where the door is. I can’t and won’t force you to be in a place that you don’t want to be in. And what I most definitely won’t tolerate is you disrespecting me, Jordana.”

I felt my body temperature rise at her accusing me of something that I definitely wasn’t doing or trying to do. I was just trying to tell her how I felt and keep things honest with her, something she was always telling me and the girls to do during our group meetings.

I took in a deep breath trying to calm myself down before speaking up again. “I’m not trying to disrespect you, Aubrey, I’m just telling you how I feel. How you’ve been making me feel for a few months now.”

The tightness in her face slowly started to ease up. She remained silent, watching me closely and I couldn't lie, I was starting to feel uncomfortable by her stare. Aubrey wasn't one to not talk so her silence right now was strange as hell. But even though she was silent, I wasn't about to do the same.

"And honestly maybe you're right. Maybe being here just isn't the right move for me anymore," I voiced, causing an emotionless gaze to form on Aubrey's face. "I need a break so I can figure out whether or not I truly want to be here. It's clear that we're not agreeing on the situation and I'm not trying to cause any further issues with you. A break away from the salon would be good for the both of us I feel."

During my exchange with Aubrey, I'd made up my mind about what I needed. Having a break away from the salon and taking a pause on doing clients would give me the clarity I needed to decide if I should remain here any longer.

"But if a break isn't something you're okay with me having then that's fine. I guess my time here is over."

"You can have your break, Jordana," she suddenly said, surprising the fuck out of me. "Take as much time as you need and when you're ready to let me know your decision, I'll be here ready to listen."

Her tone had changed greatly but I was glad that she wasn't coming at me sideways about taking a break.

I nodded at her before deciding that it was officially time to take my leave. I headed for the door and just as I began to turn its handle, I heard footsteps retreat away from the door. I pulled it open only to see the back of four heads as they rushed down the corridor.

I almost wanted to chuckle at the fact that the girls had been eavesdropping but since I wasn't in an amused mood, I decided against it and followed them into the main salon area.

When I arrived I noticed the comforting smiles they each gave me which I returned as I headed to my workstation. I silently packed up my things and it wasn't until I was done that I told the girls goodbye.

Kymani looked like she wanted to say something more to me, but she didn't which I was grateful for because talking about Aubrey was the last thing I wanted to do right now. I just wanted to go home.

After a fifteen-minute drive, I arrived home and it wasn't until I'd parked my car that I decided to grab my phone from my bag that had gone

off a couple times during the drive.

There were four new texts.

The first one from CC read: *FaceTime me later? I miss you.*

The second one from Kymani read: *Girl, are you okay? Can't believe that bitch had the balls to act like you were disrespecting her!*

And the third one also from Kymani read: *She's the disrespectful one with her bitch ass.*

The final one was from the person I'd missed all day and it read, *I hope you've had a good day, sweetheart. I can't wait to taste you tonight.*

Desire burned a hot spot in the pit of my stomach and the corners of my lips tugged up as I read his text over and over again like one simp. He had me feeling like a schoolgirl with a new crush that I couldn't get enough of.

Ding!

But the sound of a new text coming in distracted me and I was greeted to another message from Kymani.

Please tell me you're good, J.

I quickly typed back, *Hey, Ky. Yes I'm fine, thanks for checking on me.*

Kymani: *No problem, girl!*

Kymani: *Aubrey ain't nothing but a bitch and I'm glad you're taking the break you need.*

Me: *So am I.*

Me: *I'm even shocked she agreed.*

Kymani: *Man fuck her bitch ass.*

Kymani: *She's just jealous of you, girl.*

Kymani: *She's jealous of all us.*

Kymani: *Sometimes I wish she'd just drop dead!*

Kymani: *Eventually she's gonna learn that she'll never have even half of the talent you have. She's nothing without us. I think it's time you and I strongly consider leaving. We could get our own spot together. Become business partners and make so much money together.*

Kymani: *It would be lit!*

Me: *It would be lit.*

Me: *I have some serious thinking to do.*

Kymani: *Just let me know what you decide, babe.*

Kymani: *I'm here for you always.*

Me: *Thank you so much, beautiful. I appreciate you so much.*

And I really did appreciate Kymani. Out of all the girls in the salon, she seemed to like me the most and I was glad that I had her support.

As for my future at Aubrey's, I had a lot to think about but for now I wasn't trying to think about my career. What I needed was a warm, long shower, a home cooked meal and a glass of red wine while one of my favorite shows played on my TV.

An hour later I'd gotten settled in my home, showered, and had just started preparing one of my comfort meals, chicken parmesan, when I remembered that I needed to FaceTime Charlie.

"So, how's Genesis's new girlfriend doing? Did she have a good day at work today?"

I immediately started laughing and shaking my head at the woman peering at me on her iPhone's screen.

I was currently resting against my kitchen counter while I held my phone with one hand and stared down at Charlie's face.

Since that night at GW Eleven when Charlie had found out the truth about Genesis and I, I'd made it my top priority to reach out to her the next day and come clean to her about how exactly Genesis and I had started messing around. She now knew about us first meeting at his house, my close bond with Gabi and Kaiser and the very first night Genesis and I had sex. She knew everything and I felt no ways about her knowing. I shouldn't have kept it from her in the first place and I still felt bad for doing that but I was glad that she now knew everything there was to know.

"Now you know damn well I'm not that man's girlfriend, Charlie. I told you we're just having fun."

Her left brow lifted as she inspected me carefully. "And if '*just having fun* '—" She lifted a hand to form air quotes while speaking. "—Turns into something more, what then?"

"We've both agreed that it's not anything more, CC. It's just really great sex that we're enjoying for as long as we want it. That's it."

"But why can't it be something more? You two look good together and I can tell you're comfortable around him. He makes you happy, J. Why not see where it could go—"

"I don't want to see where it could go because it isn't going anywhere," I snapped. "Please just drop it, Charlie."

She looked taken aback by the sudden firmness in my tone but thankfully she did as I wanted and stopped pushing the subject of Genesis

and I being more than fuck buddies.

But before she moved on completely to a new topic she was quick to say, “I just don’t want you closing yourself off from being with someone great because of your past. You deserve to be happy, Jordana. Don’t ever forget that.”

We spent a few more minutes on the phone, catching up and to my surprise, Charlie decided to admit to me what I’d suspected for a long time now.

She had feelings for Dane. But even though she had feelings for him, she wasn’t quite ready to tell him yet. She wanted some more time to come to terms with how she felt and when the time was right, she would reveal her truth to him.

I respected her decision wholeheartedly and told her that whenever she needed me as a sounding board for her thoughts and emotions I would be here. Always.

After our brief yet meaningful FaceTime call, I continued cooking. I’d been cooking with Kehlani’s seductive vocals playing in the background but now that my call with Charlie was over, all I needed was some peace and quiet so I could be alone with my thoughts. My thoughts that refused to stop repeating Charlie’s words over and over again in my head.

“I just don’t want you closing yourself off from being with someone great because of your past. You deserve to be happy, Jordana. Don’t ever forget that.”

For the past three years I’d been certain that relationships were not for me and ‘til this day I was still sure of that. I didn’t want a relationship and I would never need one as far as I was concerned. I’d been too scarred by my past to open myself up to the possibility of a relationship. I wasn’t good enough in my last relationship and I’d never be good enough if I ever decided to get in a new one.

I had no one to blame but myself for thinking that my ex truly loved me. Till this day I know I need to get my eyes checked because I really don’t know what I used to see in that man…

You only saw what he wanted you to see which was him showering you with sweet lies when in reality he wanted someone else… someone who you knew very well.

My ex… Bryson Walker, my unforgettable ex who left me for another woman in the last year of our two-year relationship. Who was that woman

you wonder?

My best friend.

I still remember the night I'd caught them in his bed. I wanted to surprise him because it'd been a minute since we'd spent some time together. I came to his house, entered with the key that he'd given me, only to hear noises coming from the bedroom. All I kept thinking as I slowly walked to his bedroom was that this was one fucked up nightmare that I was going to wake up from soon.

But there was nothing to wake up from because this was reality. This was my life.

And when I entered his bedroom and caught the two of them together, he had the audacity to tell me to give them some privacy.

I should've killed him right then and there but I didn't have it in me. I was too heartbroken seeing my "best friend" smiling and giggling while my boyfriend remained on top of her.

I ran out of his bedroom and his home, not once looking back.

I still remembered the text he'd sent later that evening:

I should say that I'm sorry that you saw us together but I'm not. She's who I want, not you. I'm just sorry I let things get so deep between us. She's who I wanted from the start and I'm going to be with her. Not you.

Of course, I didn't respond to his text. I didn't have to because a week later the mothafucka got granted with a response that made him remember to never fuck with me again.

My brothers beat his ass up so bad that it was a miracle he'd remained alive after they'd dealt with him. He'd clearly forgotten about the men in my life that didn't play about me but after the beat down he'd received from them, he would never forget them now. And he'd been too spooked to go to the cops and Jasiel being a DEA agent came in handy to give him an extra scare. So, I knew my brothers weren't going to get in trouble for what they'd done to him.

I hadn't seen my ex, Bryson, in three years and still he had such a powerful hold on my life. We'd been together for two years so it wasn't easy trying to forget him like he hadn't existed in my life. As for my ex-best friend, I had no idea where she was nor did I care. I did know that they were no longer together.

Last year I'd heard from an old mutual friend of ours that Bryson had recently gotten engaged to some popular artist. I didn't bother to go look

her up. All I knew was that she was a painter who had her own art gallery and designed all types of creative pieces for people.

Hearing that he was no longer with my ex-best friend should have made me happy but it didn't. After finding out that he was engaged to someone who wasn't me, that was enough to make me gulp down an entire bottle of Casamigos in one night.

I'd been in love with that man. Deeply in love. I would've done anything for that man. Stolen for him… killed for him… died for him. Anything you name it; I would've done it. But he'd crushed my heart like it'd meant nothing to him. Crushed it, set it on fire and thrown the ashes straight into the trash. Like I'd meant nothing to him. Like what we'd shared meant absolutely nothing to him.

He'd turned me into a whole new woman when it came to the opposite sex. When he'd broken my heart, I became convinced that men were good for one thing onl—

Knock! Knock!

The sound of knocks on my front door pulled me out of my thoughts and I sauntered out my kitchen to head to the front door. As soon as my hand went for the door's handle, I wasn't able to stop the heat that traveled through every fiber of my being and the tingle that rushed between my legs.

I pulled the door open and one look into those dark brown eyes was enough to make me feel like everything in my life was just right. Everything in the world was exactly how it needed to be with *him* in my presence. He was dressed in one of the greatest combos on a man. The type of combo that made a woman like me want to hang up my jersey and tell the whole world that I was a taken woman by him alone. The type of combo that made me want to have all of his babies right this second and made me want to take out a life insurance policy for him only. What combo is this you ask? A white t-shirt and gray sweatpants.

He parted his lips to greet me but I didn't let him get a word out because I quickly stepped forward, reached for the back of his neck, and pulled his lips to join mine. And just like that every part of me was at peace. With his lips connected to mine, I could die a happy woman. I could die knowing that I'd gotten a taste of one of God's greatest creations.

I deepened our kiss, slid my tongue through his parted lips and dominated his mouth. Our tongues began to move and I led the dance, making it clear how bad I wanted him. While my hands stroked the back of

his neck, his hands went to the small of my back then my ass which he cupped tightly with both palms. Eventually he started groaning the sloppier our kiss got and I smiled before sucking on his bottom lip for a few seconds then I pulled away from him.

“Hey, handsome,” I greeted him innocently like I hadn’t just stolen his breath away by kissing him in the nastiest way ever. “You hungry?”

“Hell yes I’m hungry,” he whispered breathlessly, staring down at me with a lustful look. “Too fucking hungry for you, Dana.”

I grinned and let out a gentle moan when I felt him cup my pussy from the back of my biker shorts.

“Gene… food first.”

“But I want you now,” he demanded, pressing his lips to my neck, and sinking his teeth into my flesh.

I whimpered at the bite before saying, “And I promise you can have me once we finish eating.”

He lifted his head up from my neck so he could look down at me again. His eyes were demanding and passionate, making my arousal for him leak out of me faster.

“This is your first time spending some time in my home, remember? As soon as we finish eating, you can do whatever you want to me… anywhere you like… the bedroom… the kitchen… the balcony.”

His hands suddenly left my body and he reached for my hand only to lead me away from the front door to the kitchen on the left-hand side.

“Time for us to hurry the fuck up and eat then.”

“Genesis!” I laughed at his eagerness for us to quickly eat.

We’d agreed on him coming over to mine for a change since I was always at his apartment or his house. He’d never had the chance to taste my cooking and I was more than willing to let him taste some tonight including having a taste of me. And now that he was in my home, I was unable to stop the smile that kept growing on my lips the more I watched him in my space. He fit right into my apartment… like he truly belonged here… with me.

Rather than entertaining the thoughts trying to creep in my mind, I continued to enjoy my meal with Genesis and focused on our conversation. I’d dished out the chicken parmesan for the both of us and we were now sitting at my dining table, enjoying each other’s company.

“So, tell me, sweetheart, how was your day?” He asked, reaching across the table for my free hand and I melted at his desire to hold me.

I'd learned pretty quickly that his number one love language was physical touch which I was more than willing to provide him with because it was one of my top love languages too.

Talking to Genesis was always such a breath of fresh air and though I was tempted to tell him about what happened with Aubrey today at the salon, I decided not to. He didn't need to hear about the problems in my life because they weren't his concern and they never would be.

I told him about my day, he told me about his and we both continued to bask in the enjoyable moment of us sharing a meal together. It was great having Genesis in my space and I couldn't wait to have him over again many more times. I was going to enjoy our situation for as long as I could and when it was all said and done, I'd forever have our sweet moments together stored in my memory.

"So, imagine my surprise when shorty tells me that she'll never turn her back on me… only when I'm giving her back shots and making her make all types of noises while I'm hitting it doggy style."

Loud laughter rang out and I immediately started feeling like my skin was crawling.

"Ew, ew, ewwwwwww!" I exclaimed, covering my ears. "I ain't tryna hear another one of your hoe stories, Jai!"

"Well, you in my crib ain't you? So, you gon' listen to whatever the hell I have to say, Peanut." He stuck his tongue out, clearly enjoying the fact that I was being subjected to hear about his promiscuity.

"You disgust me," I said, shooting daggers his way.

"Love you too, sis." He winked, leaning back against the sofa he sat on. "Don't be mad that I got game. You know I'm the only brother you have that actually has some."

"You damn liar," Jaxson voiced.

"You mean the only brother that will probably have a broken penis in the next few years because of how much of a hoe he is?" I countered, causing Jasiel and Jaxson to start laughing again.

Jaiden flipped me the bird and I smirked before reaching over for the popcorn bucket that Jaxson had been hogging for the past couple minutes.

Every month my brothers and I had movie night at one of our houses. We would take turns in hosting it and this month we were having it in Jaiden's home. He lived in a three-bedroom townhouse about ten minutes away from our mother's home. It had two bathrooms, a living room, a kitchen with real hardwood flooring and quartz countertops, three walk in closets, a private garage and a private balcony that gave stunning views of the city.

At only twenty-four, my baby brother was one of the best web developers in the city and was making major coin working for top dollar tech companies.

Jaxson was a real estate agent and property investor and Jasiel was a DEA agent. They too had their own spots – Jaxson lived in a penthouse whereas Jasiel had a two-bedroom townhouse. My brothers were each killing it in their careers and I was blessed to have intelligent, hardworking, and successful brothers. As annoying as they were I loved spending time with them and I was glad that we were as close as we were today.

Eventually Jasiel stopped sharing his hoe story and we started our second film of the night, The Invitation. We loved horror and thriller films, so we were all in agreement on the next film to watch.

About ten minutes into the film, my phone went off and I quickly swiped it from the center table.

"No phones allowed, Peanut. You know the rules."

I turned to the right to see the stern look on Jasiel's face as he watched me with my phone in hand. He sat next to me on one couch while Jaiden and Jaxson took the couch to the right of us.

"My bad." I shot him an apologetic look. "Let me just quickly see if it's important before I turn my phone off."

He reluctantly nodded and I looked away from him to see who had contacted me.

To my surprise it was Aubrey.

I'd like to apologize for my actions yesterday and making you feel worthless. Those were not my intentions at all. That's never been my intentions. All I want is for you to be the best person that you can be and I know I'm a little hard on you at times… okay maybe very hard on you but I just want to help you do your best. I'm sorry for making you feel like shit. You're a talented hairdresser, Jordana. You and I both know that. There's no way I would've hired you if I didn't admire your work and how hard you

work. I see myself in you. I see that hunger you have, that drive and I don't want you feeling like I don't appreciate you because I do. I won't force you to do anything you don't want to do. Take as much time as you need to figure out if you still want to be at the salon. Whatever decision you make, I'll respect it wholeheartedly.

I respected her reaching out to me and keeping it real with me too. But I still had some major thinking to do about my career at Aubrey's Artistry. Was working under someone what I really wanted to do for the rest of my career as a hairdresser or did I have it in me to take that bold step of going out on my own?

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genesis

"I'D LIKE to apologize on behalf of my dumb ass cousin, man. He had no right doing what he did that night to Jordana."

I nodded but kept silent as I stared at my reflection in the full length mirror in front of me.

"But I'm positive that he now knows for sure that your woman is completely off limits."

I slowly looked over my shoulder at the man seated in the corner of my closet with a smug grin plastered on his lips.

"Matter fact, I'm positive that everyone knows she's off limits, *Mr. I'll Choke Out Anyone Who Messes With Her.* " Laughter erupted out of him and I was just about to flip him the bird until a question was suddenly posed my way.

"How do you feel about the suit, G?"

I stared back at my reflection and began to admire the gray three-piece suit that had been tailored to perfection on my body.

"I fucking love it." My eyes darted to the walnut skinned man standing beside me, now adjusting the collars of my suit one last time. "Appreciate you hooking a brotha up."

He nodded with a pleased smile and I turned around so I could extend my closed fist to him which he dapped immediately.

Judah was my personal tailor who stayed keeping me in the best custom suits that money could buy. He was the best at what he did and I was grateful for his services.

After Judah was done making sure that my suit was perfect, he packed up his things and said his goodbyes to Dane and I. I offered to walk him out

but he dismissed my offer and teased me by saying, “I know my way out your crib, nigga. I’m not your woman that you need to see off. Be easy.”

That remark was more than enough to get Dane riled up and laughing at my expense once again.

“See? Even Judah knows how protective you are over your woman and he wasn’t even there that night,” Dane said.

“How many times I gotta say that she ain’t my woman?”

“As many times as you like, nigga. Still doesn’t change what I saw that night…”

I turned away from him as I hung up my suit jacket in the wardrobe behind me.

“I peeped the way you were looking at her all night, Gene. Even during the times when you were forcing yourself to not look at her, I noticed.”

Of course, he noticed. The nigga didn’t get the title of being my best friend for no damn reason.

“Are you finally ready to admit that you’ve caught feelings for her?”

“Are you finally ready to admit to CC that you’ve caught feelings for her?” I asked him, turning to face him, and crossing my arms over my clothed chest.

The smug grin that had been stuck on his face for a minute now, suddenly disappeared.

“Touché, nigga.” He let out a light chuckle. “I want to tell her, believe me I do, but I’m scared, man. What if she doesn’t want m—”

“You have nothing to be afraid of, D.” I quickly cut him off. “The same way you noticed me that night, I noticed you too. The both of you. You were looking at each other like you’re deeply in love.”

His brown eyes lit up.

“Trust me when I say she’s feeling you the same way you’re feeling her. You’d be a fool to not realize that by now.”

He sighed then nodded in agreement. “I guess I need to man up and tell her soon.”

“You do.”

“But the same way I’d be a fool to not realize how CC feels about me is the same way you’d be a fool to keep lying to yourself about things with Jordana just being sex.”

My heart skittered and I spotted the seriousness growing in Dane’s eyes.

“You need to tell her how you feel before you get yourself hurt, G.”

I shook my head from side to side. “It doesn’t matter how I feel, she doesn’t want a relationship.”

“Just because she said she doesn’t want one that doesn’t mean she actually means it.”

“Oh, I’m pretty sure she means it,” I replied, moving toward the island chest of drawers in the middle of the room.

I leaned against it while keeping my gaze locked on Dane who had now gotten up from the armchair to come closer to me.

“And what makes you so sure?” He questioned me with an intent stare once he’d joined me by the island.

“I get the feeling that some idiot messed with her heart which is why she’s so closed off to getting into something serious. And as much as I’d like to prove to her that I’m not him, I don’t want to force her to get into something she clearly doesn’t want. I also don’t like the possibility of her punishing me for the sins of her ex.”

“And I get your fears, G, but they don’t change the fact that you haven’t told her how you truly feel. You haven’t given her the chance to sit with your truth. Most importantly, you haven’t given yourself the chance to be honest with her. You’ve been pretending like you’re cool with things being just sex when in reality you’ve wanted more with her from the very first day you laid eyes on her.”

I hated that he was right. I hated that he saw right through my situation with Jordana. And most of all, I hated that he knew me better than I knew myself sometimes. But as my best friend it was his job to call me out on my bullshit and motivate me to do the shit that I was reluctant to do.

I looked down at the glass island below us to avoid looking into his eyes.

“You need to tell her, Genesis. You know you do. Just keep it real with her and if she’s still adamant on things just being sex at least you know where you stand with her. But you can’t keep playing yourself like this, man. You deserve to be happy and pretending to be cool with just fucking around with Jordana ain’t you being happy. That’s you settling. Stop settling for less when you know damn well that you deserve the best.”

After his last line I had no choice but to look at him. I was even tempted to give him a round of applause but I knew it’d only get to his head so I decided against it. But God damn! Dane was spitting some real shit and

he’d honestly made me speechless. Something that was hard for people to do to me.

Dane was one hundred percent right. I’d caught feelings for Jordana and I wanted more with her. But I was afraid. Afraid of losing her because of her certainty of not being in a relationship.

I don’t want to lose her but I can’t keep acting like I don’t want more. At this point, I need more. I want to show her the world, give her the world and spend every day seeing her happy. I need to tell her the truth.

I would be seeing her tonight at Gabi’s book launch dinner. I’d offered to come and pick up her myself but she’d made it clear that she didn’t want me worrying about her when I had to make sure Gabi’s event went off without a hitch. I could never stop worrying about her though which was why I’d arranged with Eddie, my driver, to go pick her up and take her to GW. I didn’t need him taking her home though because she would be coming home with me.

Telling Jordana, the truth once we were done at Gabi’s event tonight, suddenly seemed like the perfect idea. On the way home I would reveal my true feelings to her. I could only hope and pray that God gave me the strength and confidence I needed tonight.

———

“Geneeeee.”

“Patience, Gab.”

“You know how much I hate surprises.”

“And you know that ain’t got shit to do with me because I’m going to surprise you every chance that I get.”

The corners of her mouth lifted into a bright smile.

“Sir,” I heard a familiar voice call out from behind me and I turned around to see Kross walking out of GW Eleven’s main dining room.

“Ready when you are.”

I nodded then turned to face the woman of the hour whose eyes were currently shielded by a silk blindfold.

“You ready, sis?”

“Yesssss!” She squealed excitedly and I chuckled before reaching for her hand.

I slowly led her into the main dining room and once she'd stepped into the room, I nodded at the lady on the other side of the room. She lifted her mic to her lips and her band began to play one of her greatest hits.

As soon as Victoria Monét's vocals filled the room, I let go of Gabi's hand, untied her blindfold, and lifted it from her eyes.

"Oh… my… God."

Gabi's mouth was now wide open, her eyes bulging and her posture completely still as she looked ahead at her favorite singer performing one of her songs, *Moment.*

"That's… That's Victoria!" She screamed and I couldn't help but laugh.

"Yes that's her," I confirmed.

Victoria waved at Gabi while continuing to sing. Only sending Gabi further into an excited frenzy.

"Oh my God! Genesis, you didn't!" She turned to me with teary eyes.

"I sure did." I grabbed hold of her hand and squeezed it tight.

"Genesis, you…" Her eyes drifted around the room and she took in all the custom decorations, the long dining table that was in the center of the room with all her friends, publishing team and a few of her biggest fans.

Everyone had their phones out and were now recording the special moment of Gabrielle taking in all that had been done for her.

I didn't want Gabi planning a damn thing for her fifth book launch and I'd meant it. I'd reached out to her publishing team to assist me with all the details I needed to make her book launch a success and had the best event planner in the game, Miranda, by my side when it came to creating the perfect book launch.

I'd shut down GW Eleven for the day so Gabi's book launch could be had in the main dining room with no disturbances. Victoria Monét was performing and hosting the event too. There would be games that Gabi and her guests could play, prizes to be won related to Gabi and her poetry, a three-course meal with bottomless champagne, a cake for Gabi to cut, a photo booth for Gabi to take pictures with her guests and space for everyone to dance the night away once all the main activities were over.

"Genesis, w-why… w-why are you so good to me?" Her voice was now breaking and I could see how glossy both her eyes had gotten.

"You're my sister, Gab. It's my job to be nothing but good to you."

She instantly pulled me into her arms and hugged me. I hugged her back and gently stroked her back.

“I’m so proud of you. You’re an amazing writer and you deserve all of this and more, Gabi. You deserve to be celebrated every single day and I’ll always be here to make sure you get the best.”

“Thank you so much, Genesis,” she cried. “I love you.”

“I love you more, sis.”

After we embraced, we watched the rest of Victoria’s performance of Moment and once she was done singing, Gabi rushed to the dining table to greet all of the people that had come out to celebrate her tonight.

“Hey y’all! Thank you so much for coming to my book launch! I love and appreciate you all so, so much!”

They all clapped for her and Gabi took the time out to go around the table to give each person a thank you hug for coming to her event. Then she was rushing up to Victoria and warmly greeted her with a hug. Seeing how happy my sister was told me all I needed to know about how well I’d done tonight.

Without being able to stop myself, my eyes traveled down the dining table until they landed on the beauty that never failed to put a smile on my face.

She’s so fucking perfect.

Jordana’s angelic eyes locked on mine and we ended up smiling at each other at the exact same time. I winked at her which caused her smile to widen and a warm, youthful blush pinked her cheeks.

Everything about the dress she’d decided to wear tonight I adored. Her dress looked like it was painted on her womanly figure. It was a mini knit dress with silver lines all over the cocoa fabric. It had a slit on one side that revealed a little bit of her thigh and my hands suddenly ached with the need to caress her. The dress highlighted her curves too well and I felt blessed that she’d decided to gift me with the privilege of seeing her wear it.

“Genesis!”

The call of my name made me reluctantly slip my eyes away from Jordana and I turned to see Sienna, Gabi’s publisher walking up to me.

“You’ve done such an amazing job tonight,” she announced once she was in front of me. “Gabi really is lucky to have a brother as great as you.”

“I appreciate the compliment, Sienna.”

“And I appreciate you being such a great help to the best poet I have ever signed,” she replied, lifting a hand to my chest, and patting it gently. “You’ve got such a good heart, Genesis.”

I simply smiled, not having anything more to say to her. I was ready for her to head back to the table and engage in the festivities that I had planned for Gabi and her guests. But I had a strong hunch from the lust I could see in her eyes and the way she was smiling extra hard at me that she wasn't planning on leaving me anytime soon.

Sienna had always wanted me.

From the second she found out I was Gabi's brother; she'd throw various hints my way trying to get my attention. But I'd never reciprocated her energy because for starters I wasn't trying to get involved with the woman who had such a major role in my sister's career and secondly, she just wasn't my type.

Don't get me wrong, she was an attractive woman with a svelte figure, smooth beige skin, warm hazel eyes, long curly hair but she just wasn't who I wanted.

Eventually Sienna left me alone and headed back to her seat to join everyone else. I looked over at Jordana, hoping to catch her eye again but unfortunately she wasn't looking in my direction anymore.

Now that I was getting a look at her stunning face again, I was able to notice how uncomfortable she looked all of a sudden.

I was tempted to go up to her and pull her to the side so I could find out what was up but Victoria Monét was now talking to the guests and doing her role as the host of the night. I knew that going up to Jordana was out of the question.

About fifteen minutes into Gabi's book launch, the woman that had designed Gabi's book cover, Destiny arrived and Gabi jumped out of her seat at the head of the table to greet her.

"Destiny! Bryson! You made it!"

"Hey, girl! I'm so sorry we're late," Destiny said with a regretful look.

An elegantly dressed Destiny walked in holding the front of her noticeable bump and holding onto the hand of a smartly dressed man.

"Don't be silly," Gabi replied, arriving in front of her and the man that was by her side. "I'm just glad you both made it."

"We're glad we made it too," the man replied, smiling wide.

Gabi and Destiny embraced then Gabi embraced the man next.

"Genesis!" Gabi waved me over. "Come on over and meet Destiny and Bryson."

I obeyed, leaving my corner, and coming over to greet Gabi's friends. She introduced us and I quickly learned that Bryson was Destiny's fiancé who Gabi had met a few times when she went to visit Destiny's art gallery.

Destiny was a painter who had a successful art gallery in the city and had created many amazing paintings for people. Her and Gabi had met at a creative event a few years ago and decided to become friends. Destiny had designed Gabi's newest book cover by creating a custom painting piece that was truly one of the greatest abstract paintings I'd seen in my life. The woman was extremely talented and I could see why her and Gabi had gotten along. They were two creative beings who were good at what they did.

"Come on, let's get you two seated."

Gabi led them to their seats and it wasn't until they got close to Jordana that I noticed the way Bryson's eyes widened at the sight of her. Jordana froze as she looked up at him and her face went blank.

My heart skipped several beats because of the shift in her energy that I could not only see but feel too.

They know each other.

Once Bryson and Destiny had taken their seats, Victoria continued with hosting the event and announced the poetry game that everyone would be playing. My focus refused to depart from Jordana and it wasn't long until I clocked onto how broken-hearted she suddenly looked. She had her head down and was refusing to look at anyone or anything.

It was at that moment that I was able to connect the dots.

Bryson is someone she used to know… used to love.

A sinking feeling filled my chest as I came to the realization that I'd used the wrong word. He wasn't someone she used to love. He was someone she still loved and seeing him here at Gabi's event with someone else that wasn't her was probably killing her inside right now.

Fuck.

Now I was mad for even thinking I could tell her the truth about how I felt about her tonight.

She won't care how I feel about her. Not when she's still stuck on someone else. Someone else that isn't you.

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jordana

FATE HAD to be playing a cruel joke on me tonight. A joke that I wasn't finding funny at all. I hadn't seen my ex in three years but here he was. Sitting next to his gorgeous fiancé, the painter. The two of them looking like one picture perfect family.

I remembered Gabi telling me about her book cover and how it was an abstract painting that has been custom made by her painter friend. Never in a million years would I have guessed that her painter friend was the woman who was currently engaged to Bryson. Pregnant for him too.

Wow.

What horrible sin had I committed for Karma to do this to me? Who had I wronged? Who had I offended?

I could no longer think straight or look at anyone. I just kept my head down while Victoria Monét continued hosting Gabi's event. Gabi's spectacular event that Genesis had put together. I could no longer enjoy my night now that I knew who sat a few seats down the table from me.

He still looked as handsome as the day I'd first laid eyes on him. He still possessed some of the greatest features I'd ever seen on a man. Cocoa brown eyes, bushy beard, sexy three sixty waves on his head, clear cinnamon skin and plump lips… yeah he was fine as fuck and I'd be the biggest fool to try and deny it. But him being fine didn't change what he'd done. Him being fine didn't change how he'd betrayed me, broken me, and disrespected me.

I tried my hardest to forget about his presence and focus back on Gabi's book launch but it was *So. Damn. Hard.*

Memories of the past come flooding into my mind, sending continuous stabs of pain through my heart.

It all hurt so much and at this point I was ready to go home. I didn't want to be in the same room as the man that had crushed my soul into a million pieces but at the same time I wasn't trying to leave Gabi's event so soon. I knew she'd be surprised and probably upset if I just up and left.

So, what that Bryson's here?

Just ignore him and do you. He's not important. Gabi is.

I decided to take my own advice and focus on enjoying Gabi's event. I kept my head lifted high, forced a smile on my face and engaged in the games being played.

During the festivities, my eyes found Genesis. He was standing in the corner of the room, overseeing everything, and making sure his team were doing everything they needed to do.

He'd made sure that every guest in attendance had their own personal waiter and I couldn't lie, it was pretty lit having someone at my beck and call. He'd gotten Gabi's favorite artist, Victoria Monét to perform and host Gabi's event which I found to be the sweetest thing ever.

Genesis had gone above and beyond for his sister and I was turned on by how generous, attentive, and kindhearted he truly was.

He'd arranged his driver to come pick me up tonight and I was in awe at how this man was always showing up for me. He was always trying to make sure that I was good and it was so attractive to know how much he cared about me.

My eyes were currently on him but he wasn't looking in my direction, making me feel empty inside.

Prior to my ex walking in, I'd given Genesis a smile which he gave me at the exact same time followed by a sexy wink. He'd come dressed in a gray suit tonight and the pool that formed in my panties when I first saw him wasn't a joke. Now that I was looking at him again, I was reminded of just how attracted I was to this man and the more I admired him, the more the coldness that had crept through me after seeing my ex started to wash away. And the more I gazed at Genesis, the more I realized how dumb it'd been for me to allow memories of the past to haunt me when my present was everything I needed.

The time I'd spent with Genesis these past two months had been some of the best moments of my life so far. With him I felt free, happy and at

peace.

When I'm with him I never want to go and when I'm not with him, I want to run to him… he's everything I wan—

"Genesis," I heard a female voice call his name and I turned to see the one woman who just couldn't seem to keep herself away from him tonight.

Sienna .

She'd introduced herself to all the guests just before Genesis had brought Gabi into the room. She seemed to be a nice woman but when I'd first caught her interaction with Genesis earlier, a bitter taste formed in my mouth seeing her place a hand on his chest. A hand that lingered for far too long.

All I kept thinking was, *Get your hands off him, hoe. He ain't yours to touch.*

I was definitely salty about how familiar they seemed with one another which was why I'd quickly stopped looking at Genesis. Then my ex had walked in, adding fuel to the fire that had formed in my heart. But now that Sienna was out of her seat and in Genesis's face again, the fire was back. And it was ten times worse than before.

He started chuckling at something she'd said and I suddenly wanted to know what the hell was so fucking funny? Then that hand of hers was back on his board chest, stroking it like it was her most prized possession that she needed to take care of.

The sight of Genesis smiling in her face while she spoke and caressed his chest was like an invisible fist slamming into my gut. They continued to talk and I wasn't able to stop the burning sensation in my chest that seemed to get stronger with each passing moment.

I thought that eventually their conversation would come to an end and Sienna would sit her thirsty ass back down but several minutes passed and the two of them were still thick as thieves in the corner of the room, paying no mind to anyone but each other. It was like everyone else didn't exist and the only thing that was important to either of them was their conversation. Like the only thing important to Genesis was her.

Not you. Her. You'll always be second best. The same way Bryson chose another over you is the same way Genesis will choose her over you.

The more I observed Genesis and Sienna together, the more I felt my soul shattering on the inside. *This* right here was worse than seeing my ex

walk in with his fiancé. *This* right here was enough to make me want to leave and never return.

When it came for photographs at the photo booth, I took this as my chance to leave. I'd barely touched my meal and only taken small sips of my champagne. I was just ready to go.

I made sure to order an Uber which was now two minutes away. I then grabbed my purse and got out of my seat to head out the room. Luckily, everyone was too preoccupied with the event to notice me slipping out the room.

Or so I thought.

I'd left my coat at the coat check so when I left the dining room, I headed straight there.

"Dana."

Shit.

His deep voice seemed to vibrate along my nerves and I was suddenly reminded of his effect on me.

I chose to ignore him as I asked the coat check attendant for my coat and handed her the ticket I'd been given earlier. The brown skinned beauty nodded, took the ticket from me, and headed into the coat room to grab my item.

"Jordana where are you going?" he queried, his footsteps drawing closer to me.

Nowhere you care about.

"Gabi's event ain't over yet."

I continued to ignore him and when the attendant handed me coat, I thanked her, took it then turned to the exit. The opposite direction of where he was coming from.

I was determined to walk to the exit and began to walk toward the doors but the gentle pull of my arm stopped me in my tracks and a surge of heat came crashing through me.

"Jordana, quit ignoring me."

"Genesis, let me g—"

"No," he bossed. "I'm not letting you go. I couldn't do that shit even if I tried."

He tried to pull me closer to him but I remained still and refused to look his way.

"Why are you leaving without saying goodbye?"

I let out a gentle sigh. “Because I don’t want to talk. I just want to go home.”

“Okay let me at least take you ho—”

“No,” I snapped, snatching my arm out his grip and finally turning to face him. Only to suddenly wished I hadn’t.

Staring into his soulful brown eyes was starting to make me soften up and almost forget about the fact that I was jealous of his interaction with Sienna.

Almost.

“You don’t need to worry about me,” I firmly said, taking a step away from him. “Just keep worrying about the woman you’ve been letting touch up on you.”

His expression hardened and just as he parted his lips to speak, I was quick to say, “I’m clearly none of your concern so leave me the hell alone.”

And after my final words I turned away from him and rushed to the exit, ready to get the hell out of here. All I wanted was my bed. It was the one thing that could provide me solace tonight.

Arriving in the comfort of my home should have brought satisfaction to my heart and washed away the crippling emotions that were stirring inside me. Unfortunately, it didn’t. I didn’t even have the strength nor the desire to change out of my dress or take off my make up. All I could be bothered to do was kick off my heels, drop my purse and coat to my couch and head to my bed.

The second my head met my pillow was the same second that a deep sigh fell from my lips. Then the tears started falling.

I wasn’t good enough for Bryson and now I’m not good enough for Genesis. I mean how could any man want me? My own father didn’t want me.

On my eighth birthday, my father kissed me on the forehead after I blew out my candles then walked out the door and ultimately walked out the lives of my brothers, my mother and mine.

From what I’d remembered in my childhood, my mother had been the perfect wife. Always supporting my father and providing him with anything

she could give him. But still it hadn't been enough. He'd chosen another woman over her… over all of us.

He'd walked out of my life on my birthday and not looked back. He was the reason why I hadn't been able to stand my birthday after all these years. To me it was the depressing reminder that I wasn't important enough for my own father to stay in my life. I just wasn't good enough. And to me birthdays were just another year shaved off my life, another year closer to death.

It was a fucked up way of thinking but I couldn't help the pessimistic outlook that I had on certain things. I couldn't help the fact that I hated my birthday, I couldn't help the fact that I didn't feel good enough for any man and I couldn't help my insecurities.

Seeing my ex today only reminded me of how I'd never be good enough and seeing Genesis get friendly with another woman reminded me of how right I was about not trusting another man again.

I can't trust another man the way I trusted Bryson. I can't let another man in and at this point in my life, I don't think I deserve to let another man in. Clearly there's something wrong with me because my own ex didn't want to be with me. I'm better off on my own.

I'd shared same great moments with Genesis but that's all they were. *Moments* . I'd be a fool to think they were anything more. Anything real. It didn't matter how I felt about him. He would move on and find someone else.

Someone like Sienna.

In the past I'd allowed love to keep me blind. I'd failed to see the red flags with Bryson. And that's the problem with some women. We allow love to take us anywhere and I refuse to be one of those women.

My tears wouldn't stop falling and despite me shutting my eyes, they continued to fall. I knew exactly why they were falling. It wasn't because of Bryson or my father but because of the man I'd been around these past two months. The man that I couldn't go one day without thinking about. The man I'd fallen for.

Genesis Washington.

I'd been telling myself that things between Genesis and I were nothing but sex when that was a lie. Now I was trying to protect my heart by saying what we shared was nothing real but the damage had already been done so all my lying was pointless.

I'd caught feelings for Genesis. The one thing I'd told myself not to do, I'd gone against the grain and done it.

Look what you've done, Jordana. Look what you've allowed.

I continued to cry and eventually I fell asleep. Unfortunately, my slumber didn't last that long because about twenty minutes later, my doorbell rang, jolting me awake.

I sat up from my king-sized bed and swung my feet to the floor. I had no idea where my slides were so I was forced to head to my front door barefoot. I arrived at my door a few moments later and pressed my hands to it as I looked into the peephole, only for air to flee from my lungs at the figure standing on the other side. I immediately backed away from the door.

"Let me in, Jordana," he demanded and hearing him say my name sent a wave of heat down my body and straight to the center of my thighs.

I was too shocked to say anything but I didn't have to because he continued talking and what he said next was an even bigger shock.

"Enough with all these games. Enough with us pretending like what we're doing isn't something serious when it is. You know it is. You told me to leave you alone tonight but I can't, Dana… I can't leave you alone. And I'm lowkey mad at myself because I can't leave you the fuck alone. I've fallen for you, baby. You're the person I want. The *only* person I want. I can't stop thinking about you… I don't want to stop thinking about you. You're everything I've always wanted… everything I've dreamed about.

"God knew what He was doing when He made you, sweetheart. He knew how special you'd be and I'm convinced He made a woman as great as you to make me an even greater man. I want to be with you, Jordana and I also want you to be happy. But most of all, I want to spend every day from here on out seeing you happy. With me you can be rest assured, no matter what, that I got you. Always."

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genesis

"...I GOT YOU. ALWAYS."

My eyes remained sealed on the white door in front of me. The door that I was desperate to see move so I could lay eyes on the one woman I knew had my heart. My heart was hers to keep, hers to cherish and hers alone. But if she decided that she didn't want it, there would be no way I'd force her to have it. No matter how much it hurt, no matter how much it crushed me, I would never force Jordana to do anything that she didn't want to do. I cared about her too much to ever do that bullshit.

Suddenly I heard the door's lock being unlatched and my heart fluttered at the door slowly opening.

Her eyes lifted to meet mine and I suddenly felt as though the world was slowly disappearing all around me. Nothing else mattered but Jordana Evans and the more I gazed into her brown pools, the more I was certain of that fact. I wasn't able to stop my eyes from looking down at her dress. It fit her figure perfectly, in all the right ways and I was in awe at how this woman turned me on without being naked.

Gazing deeper at her allowed me to see the puffiness around her eyes and how red they slightly were. I wasted no time in moving forward, anxious to eliminate the distance between us.

"Dana, what's wrong?" I grabbed her waist, pulling her closer to me so fast that she couldn't shake herself free.

Fortunately, shaking herself free was the last thing she did. Instead, she leaned into me, pressing her chest to mine as she looked up at me.

"Why have you been crying, sweetheart?"

"Because of you," she whispered in a low silky voice.

A sinking feeling formed in my chest.

“Because I’ve caught feelings for you, Gene. I want you just as bad as you want me…”

The sinking feeling instantly disappeared and all that now remained within me was pleasure. Pleasure that trickled into every nerve that lived inside me.

“But I’m afraid,” she admitted. “I’m afraid to let you all the way in, Genesis. The last man I let in broke me in the worst way possible and after him I promised myself, I would never trust another man, the way I trusted him. I told myself I would never fall in love with another man but then you came along… switching up my whole plan.”

I lifted my hands from her waist only to raise them to the sides of her face and I kept her head lifted so she was looking right at me as I said, “You have nothing to be afraid of, my love. You are the woman of my dreams, the woman I want to wake up to everyday. Just give me the chance to show you how much you mean to me, give me the chance to show you that you can trust me always and give me the chance to show you why I’m the one for you. The only one.”

“And what about Sienna?”

I frowned. “What about her?”

Jordana reached for my hands and gently pulled them off her face, much to my dismay.

I quickly tried to hold onto her again but she shook her head from side to side.

“I saw the way you were looking at her. If she’s who you really want the __”

“Hell no, she’s not who the fuck I want, Jordana. I only entertained her tonight ‘cause I got jealous seeing the way you reacted to that fool arriving with his fiancé.”

She remained silent while keeping a locked gaze on me.

“Seeing the way you looked after he walked in had me thinking that you were still in love with him.”

Now it was her turn to frown.

“I’m not still in love with him. I was just shocked to see him and his new partner, I had no idea that they knew Gabi.”

Relief flooded my insides.

“Seeing him triggered me more than anything and brought back memories that I’d done a good job at keeping locked out of my mind. But me still being in love with him?” She cringed. “Hell fucking no.”

This time I didn’t hesitate to reach for her face again and once I had a hold on her, I leaned in to join my lips to hers.

I took her mouth in a hot and demanding kiss, trying to show her with my actions alone just how serious I was about wanting her. Her hand went to the back of my neck, pulling me in closer to her and causing need to slam inside me. Need for more of her. So much fucking more.

“Gene,” she moaned, sending me into a stronger lust filled frenzy.

Our tongues collided in sweet harmony for a few more moments before my lips slipped from hers. I let my hands drop from her face to the small of her back while I praised her with kisses across her jaw and down her neck.

“Mmmh, Genesis.”

Once my mouth was on her neck, I caught a whiff of her jasmine scent and I felt my throat going dry at the enticing smell of her.

“I… want… you,” I whispered between my kisses on her skin. “Only… you.”

“I want you too,” she replied.

“You… do?”

“Yesahhh,” she whimpered at the bite of her flesh. “I do.”

I smiled to myself before soothing the pain of my bite with a gentle suck then kiss. I straightened up so I could look down at her. My hands slid down the small of her back until they were able to cup her ass cheeks. Seeing the smile on her lips was enough to make me feel fully alive.

“So as your man it’s only right I take you out on a date.”

Her smile intensified and she nodded.

“That sounds like a great plan to me,” she replied. “Wow… this is really about to be our first ever date.” She giggled lightly with excitement shining in her eyes.

“The first of many,” I told her and before she had the chance to respond, footsteps were heard coming in our direction.

I’d stepped into her apartment but I wasn’t all the way in, allowing me to lean back and catch a glimpse of who was coming my way. When I spotted a familiar face with a filled white plastic bag in one hand and a bottle of Masseto in the other, I sent a nod of approval his way.

“Sir,” he greeted me warmly.

“Appreciate you looking out, Eddie.”

Jordana leaned in closer to me and looked out her apartment.

“Eddie?” She stared incredulously at him. “What are you doing here?”

“Boss man said you needed to eat, ma’am,” he explained while walking to us both. “So, I happily became errand boy for you tonight.”

“Awww, Eddie! Thank you so much.”

“It’s nothing, beautiful. Anything for you.”

He arrived next to me and I shot him an unimpressed look.

“Relax, nigga. It ain’t a crime for me to call your woman beautiful. That’s exactly what she is.”

“Long as you know she’s my woman,” I stated in a firm tone, causing Eddie to laugh.

Jordana laughed too, rested the side of her face against my hard chest and wrapped her arms around me.

Eddie passed the food and drink to me before saying his goodbyes to Jordana and I. Once he’d left us, Jordana stole a quick kiss from me and I groaned as soon as she’d pulled away. I wasn’t trying to stop feeling those lips anytime soon.

“You are so sweet you know that, right?”

I grinned.

“How did you know I was hungry, Gene?”

“You barely touched your food at Gabi’s event and we both know you’re never one to waste your food.”

Affection glowed in her eyes.

“You were too depressed to eat and honestly I don’t blame you, love. After seeing that nigga I would’ve lost my appetite too.”

She hadn’t told me what he’d done to break her heart but she didn’t have to. I knew he’d cheated on her and for that reason alone I wanted to fuck him up. He didn’t deserve to see any happy days as far as I was concerned and if Jordana ever gave me the word, I would rob him of the chance of seeing any happy days ever again.

“But you need to eat, Dana.”

She simpered then leaned in close to my ear so she could whisper, “And after I’m done eating all this food, I want to eat you, baby.”

I was already brick hard from being in her presence and being able to kiss her but hearing her tell me how she wanted to eat me was enough to cause a small drop of pre-cum to leak out of me.

She pressed one last kiss to my lips then took the food and wine from my hands. I watched her head to her kitchen and all I could think about was how elated I was to be with her. And I really couldn’t wait to surprise her at our first ever date.

The first date of many more to come.

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jordana

"EDDIE WILL PICK *you up at eight, sweetheart."*

"But Gene… I wanna see you now. I miss you."

The way I was talking you would think I hadn't been in his arms last night and this morning.

"I miss you more but I need to make sure everything is perfect for tonight. Just be patient, baby. I promise it'll be worth the wait."

Two days had passed since Gabi's book event and every night since then I'd spent with Genesis. When I wasn't with him, I was at home enjoying the well needed break I was having from Aubrey's salon.

It was definitely relaxing to not have to be in the salon but I couldn't lie and act like I didn't miss working when I did. I missed seeing the faces of my gorgeous clients and I missed being around the other hairstylists. But I knew I needed this break.

It was important for me to take the time out to figure out the best decision for my career. So, for now I would continue to take things easy and enjoy the new memories I was creating with my man.

My man.

It felt kind of strange calling Genesis my man when I hadn't called someone my man in over three years. But it was a good kind of strange. The kind of strange that made a giddy rush flow through me. The kind of strange that made me want to hold him tight and never let him go.

I don't know how he'd done it but he'd got me. He'd gotten me to stop being so stubborn and melted down the icy walls that had once barricaded my heart. And honestly, I was glad he'd done it. I was glad to no longer be

playing games and acting like I didn't want more with him when I did. I was glad to now be his woman.

His *woman. I really do love how that sounds.*

A proud smile curved my lips and I suddenly laughed at my reflection. I was really over here becoming a simp. A simp for no other man but Genesis.

My eyes swept up and down my physique in the full length mirror in front of me. Tonight, I'd decided to wear a midi dress in Genesis's favorite color – dark red. It had a sweetheart neckline that teased my cleavage a little and the midi cut of the dress flattered my curvaceous body very well. I'd decided to pair the dress with black Rene Caovilla stiletto heels – a gift Genesis had sent to my apartment this morning with the note:

For my pretty lady. I can't wait to see you with these on tonight and by the end of the night, I want you wearing these and nothing else… especially while you're riding me and turning me into your personal slut.

I had to physically fan myself a couple times after reading his note. I swear that man never failed to make me wet.

I was rocking gold jewelry and wearing my hair up in a ponytail. I usually preferred keeping my hair down but I decided to do something different tonight. I just hoped Genesis liked how I was looking.

After taking one last look at my reflection and being satisfied with my appearance, I grabbed my YSL chain wallet and put on my trench coat before heading out the door.

Just as Genesis had said, Eddie was parked outside my apartment at eight p.m. on the dot. Once I arrived outside, Eddie flashed me a pleased smile from where he stood by Genesis's parked Range Rover. As I walked up to him, he opened up the passenger door for me before stepping to the side.

"Good evening, ma'am."

"Good evening, Eddie," I greeted him with a large smile. "Thank you so much for picking me up."

"The pleasure is all mine," he stated. "You look wonderful tonight. Genesis is truly blessed to have you by his side."

My cheeks warmed at his compliment and I thanked him for his kind words then allowed him to take my hand as he guided me into the Rover.

"Eddie, Genesis won't tell me where our first date is," I announced a few minutes into the drive. "But I'm sure you'll tell me where we're

going.” I smiled at Eddie’s reflection in the interior rear-view mirror but he didn’t smile back.

“No can do, ma’am.” He reluctantly shook his head from side to side. “Boss man gave me explicit instructions about keeping your date a surprise.”

I groaned. “But Eddie, you love me one hundred times more than you love him. So just tell me.”

His white teeth glinted in a brief smile but he continued to shake his head ‘no.’ “You’ll find out soon enough.”

All I could do was huff and puff and keep my eyes on the tinted window next to me that showcased the brightly lit streets we were passing through.

About fifteen minutes later, Eddie indicated left and drove into the car park of a large building. It wasn’t until I took a closer look that I noticed the statue of two dolphins and a sign above the entrance that read, *“An underwater entertainment adventure.”*

A lightness formed in my chest and when I spotted a tall figure stepping out the building at the same exact moment that Eddie pulled over the car, I could no longer keep still.

The tall figure come closer to the car with a large bouquet of red roses and by the time he was right outside my door, my eyes had welled with water. He opened the door and being able to lay eyes on his beautiful face without a glass window in the way stole my breath away.

My man looked too fine tonight. An emerald silk shirt clung to his broad shoulders, black pants cloaked his long legs and on his feet were black loafers. A gold Cuban link chain hung from his neck, a diamond stud was locked in each ear and a gold watch secured around his wrist. He’d gotten a haircut and his hairline was as sharp as ever.

“You look…” He took in a deep breath and exhaled as he devoured my appearance with his eyes. “Breathtaking.”

A smile immediately took possession of my lips.

“You don’t look so bad yourself, Sir.” I looked down at the flowers he held. “Thank you so much for the roses, Genesis… they’re beautiful.”

“Nowhere as beautiful as you,” he replied. “I can’t wait to get you inside so I can get a better view of that dress on you.”

My smile grew and I leaned in close to steal a quick kiss from him. Inhaling his seductive scent made a shiver run down my spine and I knew that if we didn’t get inside to start our date, I’d be pulling Genesis inside

this car so he could have his way with me. Eddie could simply enjoy the show because I wasn't about to hold back from enjoying my man.

I pulled away from Genesis and gave him a curious stare. A stare that he understood immediately.

"Alright, let's get inside so I can finally put you out your misery and let you know what our date is."

I simpered before grabbing his hand that he held out for me then I climbed out the car.

Genesis and I walked up to the front entrance of the aquarium. The double doors were opened for us and we were greeted by a suited man.

"Good evening, Ms. Evans. I'm Sergio. Your tour guide for this evening. I hope you have an amazing time here tonight."

I greeted him back and then we followed him deeper into the aquarium. As we started walking through each room in the aquarium, Sergio began to explain each creature in the tanks around us. From fishes, turtles, frogs, octopus, crabs, oysters to crocodiles – we saw them all.

I loved fishes and had always been fascinated with all things pertaining to water which was why it was a real treat for Genesis to have planned this for me. He'd rented out the entire aquarium just so we could have a private tour. I was in complete awe at what he'd set up for our first date and during the tour I couldn't stop thanking him over and over again for arranging a private tour at the aquarium for us.

"This ain't all I've got planned for us tonight, beautiful."

The private tour was indeed not all he had in store because what I laid eyes on next turned out to be an even bigger surprise.

Sergio led us down a walkway and I looked down to see red and pink rose petals neatly sprinkled on the floor below us. There were also candles lit and the more we walked forward, the more I felt my heart swelling up.

We arrived in the final room that had a candle lit dinner table in the center and a tank that went around the entire room.

I marveled at the romantic setting in front of us and when Genesis let go of my hand so he could wrap his arm around my waist, I turned to look up at him.

"Gene… you… this… this is too much."

"No, the hell it ain't," he playfully snapped, looking at me like I'd lost my damn mind. "You're mine, Jordana and ain't nothing too much for mine."

I lifted my hands and smoothed them over the sleek bulges of his shoulders before resting them on the sides of his neck.

“Genesis,” I sweetly cooed his name while stroking his skin.

“I’m serious, baby. Nothing’s too much for you. And this is just the start of so much more. You’re an Aquarius so it was only right I brought you to the aquarium for our first date. You love the water and all its many wonders and as your man it’s my job to make sure you see all the things you love.”

“How’d you know I was an Aquarius, Gene? I never told you my birthday.”

He grinned, his perfect teeth flashing white against his walnut brown skin. He didn’t say a word but he didn’t have to. His arm that had been locked around my waist moved and his hand went under my trench coat. Then I felt the soft pads of his fingers rub on the back of my left thigh through my dress and I suddenly knew how he’d figured out my star sign.

I’d gotten a tattoo of the Aquarius glyph symbol on the back of my thigh. Two wavy lines meant to represent water.

I wasn’t super into star signs but I liked being an Aquarius and since I was a fan of all things water, I’d decided to get the symbol tattoo a few years ago.

I couldn’t believe that Genesis had gone out of his way to find out what the only tattoo on my body meant. I’d never told him about it because honestly sometimes I forgot that it was even there since it was on the back of my body.

“You are so damn cute, Gene. Thank you so much.”

“I actually hate the word cute but you calling me that is making me blush,” he voiced with a smirk. “But you welcome, my love. Like I said, nothing’s too much for you. There’s not a damn thing I won’t do for you.”

I smiled before puckering up my lips and waiting for him to drop a peck to my lips. After we kissed, he led me toward the table, helped me take off my coat and pulled out my chair. Once I was seated, he kissed my forehead before taking his seat.

For the next few hours, I was in a state of pure bliss. Genesis and I were served a three-course meal by two servers, Leo and Sophie, and while various species of fish swam around us, I was able to get lost in the great moment I was sharing with Genesis.

He was everything I’d ever needed. The more we spent time together, the more I realized that. He was patient, kind, understanding, uplifting, sexy

and he was all mine.

We talked about everything under the sun. From where we saw ourselves in five years' time, our long-term goals to our short-term goals. A few days ago, I'd told him about my decision to take a break from Aubrey's salon which he supported wholeheartedly but I decided to bring it up again now that we were on our date and having an insightful conversation. I wanted to know what he thought about me staying put at Aubrey's so I asked him and his reply was everything I didn't know I needed to hear until now.

"You need to do what makes you happy, Dana. Life is all about making choices and the number one thing you should always strive for is to be happy. Yes life has its ups and downs but we have the power to choose what path we want to go on. God has granted us with that power and I think it would be a disservice to not just yourself but God too if you didn't do what makes you happy.

"You said yourself that you enjoy working among other women that look like you and being around them motivates you in the greatest ways. Sure, being independent is a great thing but it can get lonely. Do what you feel in your heart is right and if you need to have another conversation with Aubrey then do that. As a boss myself I know how disheartened I would feel if one of my employees wasn't happy working for me and I would do everything I can to change things for the better. So, I'm sure Aubrey will try her hardest to support you in any way that she can."

Genesis really did give some of the greatest advice and I knew he would never steer me wrong.

We also spoke about my previous relationship with Bryson that had me so against relationships. Genesis knew about what Bryson had done to me because I'd told him the night we'd decided to stop playing games with each other. So, he knew about Bryson's infidelity which he wasn't happy about at all.

Genesis suggested that I consider seeing a therapist – *his* therapist to be exact. He didn't want me keeping the trauma of my past bottled up inside me and wanted me to heal from it. I had so much trauma that I needed to address like my relationship with my deadbeat father and my toxic ex-boyfriend. Genesis wanted me to address the trauma so I could improve myself and become a much better version of myself. I didn't know whether

to be impressed by the fact that he was trying to see me heal or impressed that he had a therapist.

God... why'd you have to make this man so damn perfect for me?

The more we continued to talk, eat, drink, and enjoy one another's company, the more I found my heart yearning for this man. He was sitting right in front of me and still I was longing for him in the worst way.

I wanted all the parts of this man. All the pieces of him that he'd been afraid to show with any other woman in the past, I wanted. I was no longer afraid of being tied down to one person because he was my person. He was the person that had been destined for me. Kismet had worked greatly in my favor because I'd been blessed with a king. He was a gem; *my* gem and I knew I didn't want to be without him.

How could I ever be without a man as great as him?

"Gene," I called out to him a few seconds after we'd finished our dessert.

"Yes, beautiful?"

"Let's go home."

The smile that crossed his lips was so infectious that I had no choice but to smile right back at him.

"Home. I love how that word sounds coming from you."

"You do?"

He nodded before repeating my earlier words, "Let's go home."

Home took exactly fifteen minutes to get to. Fifteen minutes that felt like a damn eternity while we sat in the backseat of his Range Rover. Eddie had picked us up and I swear it was the biggest struggle trying not to fuck Genesis in the backseat. I couldn't stop touching up on him and he couldn't stop doing the same to me.

I wanted this man so bad that it was actually quite scary. He had me thinking about no other man but him. To me no one could come close to the majestic being that he was. No one was worth the time nor the energy that I wanted to give him. And at this point it was no longer just a want – it was a need. Genesis was all I needed.

"You are so beautiful."

A satisfied sigh seeped from my lips as his large hands caressed my shoulders.

We were now in the warmth of his four-bedroom home but being indoors wasn't the reason for why I was so hot right now. We were both

standing in his bedroom, nearby the neatly laid bed that I couldn't wait to see ruffled up in a few moments. His hard chest was pressed against my back as I stood in front of him, looking over at his king-sized bed. The anticipation building inside of me for us to get lost under his silk sheets.

"Do you know how beautiful you are?"

His hands briefly left my body so he could take down my ponytail, letting my hair cascade around me. Then his hands were back on task, rubbing down my arms until he was able to tangle my fingers with his.

"Because I do," he whispered planting a kiss to the side of my neck. His lips pressing against my warm skin caused a rush of heat to flow through me. "I'm so fucking lucky… I bagged myself a baddie."

My lips upturned into a big smile. His kisses continued up and down my neck and my breaths quickened.

"Tell me… how lucky… I am, Jordana," he ordered between his pecks and I was just about to obey until I felt his hands leave my hands and reach for my breasts.

He gave them a tight generous squeeze, making my breath caught in my throat.

"Tell me how lucky I am to have a woman as sexy as you." He squeezed my boobs once again and I moaned. "Tell me how lucky I am to have a bad bitch like you."

He pinched my nipples through my dress, causing me to whimper out in a tone mixed with pain and pleasure.

"Tell me."

"You are so lucky," I told him, a tingle running down my body and straight to my clit as he continued to kiss on my neck with wet sloppy kisses. "So, fucking lucky, Gene."

His hands left my breasts and it wasn't long 'til he pulled on the straps of my dress. Once they were off my shoulders, he gave the dress a gentle tug and it fell down my body, pooling at my feet.

Now that he had me in nothing but my panties and heels, the flame had been lit inside me and I was in no mood for it to go out. I turned around to face him, gazed at the hunger in his soulful eyes before latching my lips to his. While we kissed, I reached for his shirt, anxious to get the silk off his body. His hands went to the sides of my thong which he quickly pulled down my thighs.

With our lips sealed to one another, Genesis pushed forward, causing me to walk backward until the back of my thighs met the edge of the bed.

In an instant, I was pushed down and I sank into the soft mattress below. I lifted my head to look at him standing over me and I was turned on all over again seeing his handsome face, that perfect body of his and the large print in the center of his pants.

The minute he reached for his Versace belt, I was onto him like a bee to honey and helping him unbuckle his belt. But when I tried to pull his pants down, he was quick to push my hands away. I looked up at him strangely.

“I need to taste you,” he said and it wasn’t long till I was lying on my back with my knees up as Genesis got a taste of thing he craved the most.

Me.

I was taken to great heights as he sucked, licked, and kissed on my pussy in the best ways. Mind-blowing ways that had me screaming and crying out his name nonstop.

“G-Genesis!”

“Hmmm,” he groaned while sucking on my clit and thrusting two fingers in and out of my tightness.

Clearly he didn’t care about how crazy he was making me which was honestly nothing new. He loved seeing me act a damn fool whenever he had his lips between my thighs. It was a constant reminder to the both of us that only he could get me this hot and bothered. And when it came to that sacred moment of him diving himself deep into my body, I was reminded of just how addicted I was to this man.

Our hands were laced together as he slowly moved in and out of my wet center. Our eyes were stuck on one another too. I didn’t want to stop looking at him. I wasn’t trying to miss a single second of seeing how I made him feel.

“Fuuuck. I swear each time I’m inside you feels better than the last… you gon’ make me act a fool in this bomb ass pussy and nut too soon.”

“So do it,” I whispered. “Nut in your pussy, baby.”

He growled. “Don’t… don’t say that, Dana.”

“Why not?” I teased. “This is your pussy. You can do whatever you want to it.”

His face began to tighten with an expression of both frustration and pleasure. He slowly pulled out of me only to let go of one of my hands so

he could start slapping his hard tip against my clit. My moans and sighs were instantaneous and my head spun from the sensation of his hits.

"You and your baby mama coochie are trying to get me in mothafucking trouble…"

"Genesissss," I hissed as his hits got harder and faster.

"You tryna make me put a baby in you tonight, huh?"

Before I could even answer, he slid back inside me and I could feel every inch of him making his way inside me. My walls instantly tightened around his long length and I raised my hips to meet his body each time he thrusted back inside of me.

He leaned down to capture my left breast in his mouth. His tongue teased my nipple with gentle flicks before he rolled it and bit into it. Then he moved to my other breast and did the exact same thing.

I could no longer think straight with him moving in and out of me slowly and his mouth on my nipples. Ecstasy poured through every part of me and there was no escaping it.

"Gene… baby, put it in my ass," I requested moments later.

He pulled his mouth off my nipple and froze inside me, staring down at me with a blazing fire in his eyes.

"Dana… you want it where?" he asked in a tone thick with desire.

"In my ass," I confirmed. "You know I'm a slut for no one else but you. I want to feel you filling my ass up and cuming inside me too."

He made an exasperated sound low in his throat which made me smirk.

"Give me what I need, Genesis."

I clearly didn't have to tell him twice because in an instant, he pulled out of me, let go of my hand and got off the bed. I watched him head to his closet, biting my lips at the sight of him walking around naked. He returned within seconds with a small bottle in his right hand.

He climbed back on the bed and opened the lube and I rolled over onto my stomach before getting on my hands and knees with my legs spread out. I felt the bed dip slightly as he shifted behind me and my chest began to burn with anticipation. When I felt him slowly penetrate my back passage with his now wet finger, my heartbeat shot to the roof.

"Just relax," he gently told me as he kept his finger still.

I did as he said, relaxing myself as best as I could and sighed softly when his finger pushed deeper into me. He kept the pace nice and slow as he thrusted in and out of me. It wasn't long 'til I was moaning for more.

Then he placed two fingers inside of me and I was pretty much ready for the real deal.

With his hands secured to my waist, he slowly eased into my passage and a dangerous slash of desire sliced my gut. Inch by inch he slid inside me and once he was all the way in, I was transported to a new world.

"You okay, baby? I'm… I'm not hurting you am I?"

"No… you're not… you feel good, too good, Gene."

"So do you," he groaned while slowly withdrawing out of me. "Too… fucking… good."

In and out he slowly went and I wasn't able to stop how much I was moaning for him or stop being so damn loud. It all felt fucking amazing and I didn't want it to end. Neither did Genesis who had now pushed me down to the bed so we were in the low doggy position, allowing me to feel him ten times deeper than before.

"Y-You… you so damn nasty, Dana… you really taking all this dick in your ass?"

"Yesssss," I moaned and my moans only heightened when I felt his large hand slap my ass cheeks while he was still inside me. "Sssshit, Gene!"

It wasn't just my body that was on fire at this point. My soul was on fire too. My soul that I knew belonged to nobody else but him. Each time he slowly filled me up, a stronger wave of pleasure rippled through me.

How could one man have all this power to make me feel so damn good?

It was a question that I didn't need answered because as far as I was concerned, Genesis could have all the power over me. I was his and he could do whatever he wanted to me. Any time and any place too.

"Gene… Geneeee… I'm gonna cumahhhh!"

Every nerve inside of me seemed to suddenly explode and I started shaking like I was having a seizure. My orgasm soared through me, like an incredible wave of euphoria that I'd never experienced before.

Genesis's climax came shortly after and the minute his thick load exploded inside me I was back to having convulsions as another orgasm hit me hard.

His lips stayed rooted to the back of my neck, kissing, sucking, licking, and biting on my flesh as he filled me up with his cum. As always, he had so much to release but tonight it seemed never ending. And I couldn't lie, it felt good feeling him fill me up with so much of him.

"Ahhh, Genesis…"

“I’m cuming, baby… fuck, I’m cumingggg!”

His moans were endless and with his body pressed against mine as he poured himself into me, I was in a state too powerful and too pleasurable.

“Jordanaaaaahhh,” he moaned my name and I felt my body tingle all over. “Y-You got me… you got me.”

Eventually his orgasm came to its end but we were both way too tired to move. He remained buried inside me and all it took was a few seconds before I fell into a deep slumber.

Hours later, I woke up to Genesis no longer inside me but his large arms wrapped around me. He’d cleaned us both up because I couldn’t feel the wetness I’d felt before at my back passage or between my thighs.

Clearly I’d been too tired to even notice him cleaning me up but I was glad my man had been considerate enough to take care of me.

I slowly left his arms in need of something to drink and I arrived downstairs in his kitchen moments later. After grabbing a bottle of Fiji water from his refrigerator, I went to find my purse that I’d left at the bottom of the stairs when we’d first arrived back from our date. Our incredible first date that I still couldn’t believe he’d set up for little old me.

Once I was reunited with my purse, I pulled out my phone and the first notification of a new email caught me completely off guard.

It had the title: *Dear JJ…*

There was only one man who used to call me JJ and I felt my heart skip several beats as I unlocked my phone to read his email.

Dear JJ…

I’ve been trying to find the right words to say ever since I laid eyes on you a few days ago at Gabi’s event. I can’t even lie, you look good, girl. Better than I remember and I’m honestly kicking myself for letting a good woman like you go. You blocked me on iMessage, IG, Twitter and Facebook so emailing you seemed like the next best option.

As you know, things between Mary-Jane didn’t work out. I should have never left you for her. She wasn’t worth it in the end and honestly, I don’t think any woman will ever be worth it when it comes to you, JJ.

I wish the child I had on the way was with you. I wish the ring I’d put on Destiny’s finger; I’d put on yours. I wish I never let lust get in the way of what we had. You were so good to me. Good for me. Everything I didn’t know how bad I needed until I lost you. I guess it’s true what they say about

never knowing how good something is until it's gone. You were the best woman I ever had and I would do anything to have you back, JJ. Even though it seems unrealistic with all I have going on… I still wish you and I could be together again.

I'm praying you can find it in your heart to forgive me and I'm hoping we can be friends after all these years. I lost you once before and I'm not trying to lose you again now that I've crossed paths with you again.

With Love,
Bryson

Was it shock that I felt in this current moment? *No* . More like disgust that Bryson even had the audacity to email me. After all these years he really thought that he could slide back into my life like everything he'd done to me had been swept under the rug. I'd be a fool to even let him consider that he had the smallest chance of having my heart again. I didn't hesitate to send him the following email:

Bryson,

Please know and understand that what me and you had is very much dead. I want nothing to do with you and I just pray your fiancé has the strength to deal with an imbecile like you.

I'm pretty sure you've bumped your head and gotten amnesia of the beatdown you got three years ago but if you'd like a strong reminder, I'm sure you can receive one. Try to contact me again and see what the fuck happens. It won't just be my three brothers coming for you this time, it'll be my man and trust me, you wouldn't want to feel his wrath. He doesn't play about me at all but if you'd like to meet him then feel free to keep playing games by contacting me.

Go to hell.

And after sending him that email, I didn't hesitate in blocking his email address. I then locked my phone and placed it back in my purse before heading upstairs to be with the man of my dreams.

“See I always knew the two of you would come to your senses and stop playing like you’re not made for one another.”

I shyly smiled at the pretty woman standing opposite me.

“I’m happy for you both and I’m particularly glad that my brother has found someone to bring excitement to his boring life.”

A light giggle slipped from my lips and I shook my head from left to right.

“I’m afraid you’re giving me too much credit, Gab. I’m not that interesting.”

“Oh yes you are,” she countered, determination embedded in her coffee brown eyes. “You’re the best thing to happen to Genesis in a while. The best thing to happen to all three of us.”

I followed her gaze that traveled out of my kitchen and into my living room where the cutest boy in the whole wide world sat in the middle of my rug, playing with the new toys I’d bought him. He was too lost in his own little world to care about what Gabi and I were doing in the kitchen. I also had the melodic vocals of Jill Scott playing softly in the background, keeping us all at ease as we chilled in my apartment.

As much as Kaiser loved watching shows and playing on iPads, he also loved playing with toys which I was glad about. Having him stuck in front of a screen all the time just didn’t seem healthy and I was happy to see him enjoying the toys I’d gotten just for him.

Gabi and Kaiser had come to visit me this weekend and I was gassed to have them in my home for the very first time. Kaiser had finally gotten his haircut and he looked just as handsome as he’d looked with his braids. Any hairstyle looked good on him and Gabi was blessed to have such a cute son.

“Thank you, Gabi. It really does mean a lot to hear you say that. You, Kai, and Genesis are the best things to come into my life this year.”

“I’m glad that we’ve had such a positive effect on your life, girl. You’re like family to us now and I just hope you know that if one day you decide you’re fed up with my brother, you’re not allowed to be fed up with Kai and I. You’re stuck with us unfortunately.”

I smirked. “I strongly agree. There’s no way you’re getting rid of me that easily!”

She laughed before gently nodding. We continued to talk and sip on a bottle of Masseto that I now had in my home courtesy of Genesis. He knew how much I loved the red wine which was why he'd had a whole case delivered to my apartment. I tried to tell him that I wanted to cover the cost of the wine but of course he ignored my request. Those bottles were not cheap at all (eight hundred dollars per bottle to be exact) but here Genesis went, going out of his way for me and taking care of me always.

Thanks to Genesis, I now had a cleaning crew that cleaned my apartment every month and a personal chef to make me a meal one day a week. Genesis knew I loved cooking but he also wanted me to experience being cooked for once a week by one of the top chefs at his restaurant.

"So, are you finally ready to tell me why you left my book event without giving me the chance to take pictures with you?" Gabrielle asked after sipping some wine. "And how could I forget about the fact that you didn't even say goodbye?"

I lowered my gaze from her and released a deep sigh. "Yeah… about that." My eyes met hers and I noticed the concern growing in her big brown eyes. "I'm so sorry for just leaving like that, girl."

"Don't be sorry. You were clearly triggered by Destiny and Bryson walking in. Genesis told me that he's your ex but he didn't go into any more detail. He said he'll leave it up to you to decide when you're ready to tell me about your past." Her face softened. "Are you ready to tell me what happened between you and him?"

I slowly nodded then placed my wine glass down on the counter I was leaning against before giving Gabrielle my full undivided attention.

I started from the very beginning. How Bryson and I had met during a fun night out I'd had with my best friend, how charming he'd been and how I'd fallen deeply in love with him. Only for him to break my heart in the worst way possible by cheating on me with my best friend.

"Oh my God, Jordana, I had no idea he put you through all that bullshit! I'm so sorry you had to see him again after all these years."

"You have no reason to be sorry, babe. There's no way you could've known that he was my ex. And I definitely had no idea that you and his fiancé were so close. I didn't even know who she was until I saw her walk in with him at your event."

I continued to open up to Gabi about my past with Bryson and honestly, it was heartwarming hearing her support for me. She was turning out to be

such a great friend and I was thankful to have her in my life. I also decided to tell Gabi about the email I'd received from Bryson a few days ago and I handed her my phone so she could read it for herself.

The hardened expression that formed on her face as she read Bryson's words told me everything I needed to know about her current emotions.

"That mothafucka," she muttered under her breath in a tone loud enough for me to catch. "I can't believe him. After all that Destiny has done for him…" She shook her head from left to right.

"I know how close you and Destiny are so I feel no ways about you telling her about this. I'll even screenshot it and send it over to you so you can show her. I know she's pregnant so it'll probably be best to tell her after she's had the baby, I wouldn't want anything to happen to her or the baby."

And I meant that. Destiny deserved to have a stress-free pregnancy and I wasn't trying to make things difficult for her.

"You know Genesis really is lucky to have you, Jordana. You're so kind, always thinking of others and I just know that you're the perfect woman for him."

"Thank you, Gabi. That really does mean everything coming from you."

"As for me telling Destiny, you're definitely right about me letting her know after she's had the baby. She's already having a high-risk pregnancy and I wouldn't want to make things worse. But she deserves to know the truth about Bryson and I'm going to make sure she gets it."

I gently nodded.

"You know I don't tell Genesis this enough but he really has changed my life in some of the best ways possible and I'm so glad you have each other."

She then went onto to explain how Genesis had been a silver lining in her life. Ever since they'd lost their mother eleven years ago, Genesis stepped up and became everything that Gabrielle needed.

A brother. A friend. A mentor. A confidant. A father.

I remained silent and in awe listening to Gabi tell me how Genesis had helped her in all her darkest moments. She suffered from depression and it'd been its most severe after their mother passed. Genesis made sure Gabi received the care that she needed to get back to the great individual she was. He got her the best therapist in the city and assisted in any and every way that he could.

When it came to her wanting to pursue poetry as a career, he supported her. When she dropped out of college, he supported her. He gave her feedback on all her poems, promoted her work like no other and followed her to her very first meeting with a traditional book publisher. He even got one of his favorite poems by her tatted on his body.

Gabi also opened up to me about the abusive relationship she'd been in a few years ago.

"If it hadn't been for Genesis I don't know how I would've survived that situation. I owe everything to him and I know that with him by your side, there will never be a time that you don't feel protected."

There wasn't a single part of me that doubted her words.

"I know it won't be easy learning how to trust a man again after your last relationship but trust me when I say you can trust Genesis, Jordana. All the pain, all the hurt you've experienced, he'll take it all and make sure that you have everything you need – love, happiness, and trust. He'll value not just you but your mind and heart. So, open your heart and trust him. Let him in."

I told her that I would trust him and let him in. It was a promise I intended to keep. My feelings for Genesis were only getting stronger each and every day. He only continued to show me why he was such a great man and I wanted to match his energy. He was good to me, too good and I planned to be great to him.

After Gabi and I talked in my kitchen for a few more minutes, we decided to head to the living room to spend some time with Kaiser. Since he'd played with all the new toys I'd bought him, Gabi suggested we watch a movie and once Kaiser yelled out, *"Despicable Me"* in his cute little toddler voice, I headed back to the kitchen to grab our movie snacks.

As I spent more time with Gabi and Kaiser, I couldn't help but wonder about Kaiser's father and where he was. I wasn't trying to pry in their personal business though so I definitely didn't ask. When she was ready to let me know what had happened between her and Kaiser's father, I would be here ready to listen. And if she decided not to tell me at all, I would respect her decision no matter what. I wasn't going to force her to reveal secrets that she wanted to keep buried in the past.

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genesis

"I SWEAR this is my favorite part…" Her alluring brown eyes lit up and a large smile graced her lips before she started quoting a scene from one of her favorite films. Then she couldn't stop laughing and moments later she turned to look at me, a shy look settling into her pretty face.

"Uh-uh, don't get all shy now, Miss Actress."

She giggled and I couldn't hide my smile even if I tried.

"I love seeing you happy, Dana."

The smile that broke out across her face almost blinded me with its beauty.

"Spending time with you makes me happy," she replied, leaning closer to me. "I still don't know how I'm gonna thank you for doing all of this for me, Genesis."

"No need to thank me, sweetheart. You deserve this and so much more."

Her smile brightened and she gave me one last elated look before reaching for the back of my neck and joining her lips to mine.

For our date tonight I'd decided to rent out the iPic movie theater so that Jordana and I could watch two of her favorite chick flicks, Boomerang and Deliver Us From Eva.

I'd only seen Boomerang because Eddie Murphy was in it and I'd always been a big fan of him. But Deliver Us From Eva I'd never seen until now. I couldn't lie it was a funny film, slightly problematic at times but funny, nonetheless. And romantic too which explained why Jordana liked the films so much.

The iPic theater had reclining lounge seats with pillows and blankets and had wait service which Jordana and I had enjoyed greatly at our time

here so far. I made sure that we ordered all the food on the menu so that Jordana could get a taste of everything. I didn't want her missing out on a damn thing.

I'd meant what I'd said to her. Like *really* meant it. Seeing her happy was always such a great sight to see and I would never get bored of seeing her happy. I could die a happy man knowing that she'd been happy with me.

A few weeks had passed since we'd made things official between us and I couldn't lie, I was thoroughly enjoying every moment that I spent with Jordana.

We'd been on quite a few dates so far and I knew sooner or later I'd start to lose count of them all. For our second date, she decided she wanted to take charge and arranged a helicopter ride for us to fly over the city. I'd also had my first helicopter lesson that day and I'd never been so grateful for Jordana going out of her way for me to learn something new.

Our third date, I'd booked a spa trip for us. But this wasn't just any ordinary spa trip. I'd gotten us a private jet to fly to Budapest for the weekend just so Jordana could experience a spa in a different country and have a mini vacation with me. A vacation she couldn't stop thanking me over and over again for and she most definitely showed me how thankful she was in the bedroom.

And for our fourth date, Jordana did something that had nothing on the dates I'd set up for her so far. She organized a photoshoot for me, Kaiser, and Gabrielle to take a family portrait together. She'd hired a photographer, gotten a private studio, bought clothes in all our sizes, hired a makeup artist for Gabi and even enlisted Dane's help in making sure the photoshoot went off without a hitch.

It'd been one of the best days of my life so far and I felt blessed that God had allowed me to meet such a thoughtful, caring, and selfless woman like Jordana Evans.

She was everything I'd ever needed and more. There wasn't a single thing I wouldn't do for her in this life. She had me. My heart. My soul. My body. All hers.

I also knew that the same way she had me, I had her. The fact that she always wanted to spend time with me and not just have sex, proved that. Sure, we loved enjoying each other's bodies but our connection was more than that now. There were some nights we wouldn't even need to have sex.

Just talking, sharing a meal, cuddling, or watching a film was enough for the both of us. And the way she'd handled that idiot who had emailed her a few weeks ago thinking he could worm his way back into her life, also proved that I had her. She wanted nothing to do with him and I was glad that she felt comfortable enough to tell and show me what he'd emailed her. I'd almost been tempted to go see that nigga until Jordana showed me the response she'd sent him. She'd indeed handled the situation and I was grateful to have such a loyal woman like her by my side.

"I just hope he likes me."

"The old man knows he has no choice but to like you or I'll beat his ass up."

"Genesis!" She cackled. "You can't beat up your uncle."

"I sure can," I confirmed with a smirk. "If he doesn't like my baby, I'm fucking him up on sight."

She laughingly shook her head before leaning in close to plant a sweet peck to my cheek.

"My sexy knight in shining armor," she whispered after our kiss and my lips curled into a smile.

We had now left the movie theater and I was driving us home. There was a special guest waiting for Jordana and I could tell that she was nervous. But she honestly had nothing to be worried about. Mathias was going to love her and if he even entertained the idea of not loving her, I'd fuck him up. *Period* .

Ten minutes later, I pulled up to the driveway of my four-bedroom home and to my surprise, Mathias was standing right outside the front door. When he locked eyes on Jordana sitting in the passenger seat, a large grin creased his face and I couldn't help but smile at my uncle's reaction to seeing my girlfriend.

However, my smile didn't last that long once Jordana and I were out the car.

"Would you just look at that beauty… wow, you're a real stunner, Jordana."

"Why thank you, Mr. Porter."

"Don't call me that, beautiful. Fuck all that formal shit. Call me Mathias… or Daddy if you're nasty."

"Watch it, old man," I announced, tightening my hold on Jordana's waist.

Mathias started laughing at my expense.

“You afraid I’m gonna steal your woman, younin’?”

“No, I’m afraid I’m gonna have to fuck you up in front of my woman.”

He burst into more laughter and even Jordana joined in. I eventually decided to loosen up and allowed Jordana to leave my side so that she could hug Mathias. Of course, I watched him like a hawk the entire time he hugged my baby and once they’d greeted one another, we entered my home so the two of them could spend some time getting to know one another.

It was a joy to see my uncle and my girlfriend getting along. They talked and laughed together and I was glowing internally at how quickly they were becoming close.

Mathias was the closest thing I had to a father which was why I wanted Jordana meeting him today. Yeah he was involved in a lifestyle that I didn’t particularly agree with but he wasn’t going to be in the game forever. Retirement was knocking on his door and he seemed ready to answer the door. I wanted Jordana to meet all the important people in my life and Mathias was definitely one of them.

We’d grown much closer these past few weeks. He even had a key to my home and I had one to his. Not just anyone could get a key to my crib but Mathias wasn’t just anyone. He was family and I couldn’t turn my back on him.

He was also unmarried with no children and I didn’t want him to feel like he had nobody to turn to when he had me. Gabi was still on the fence about letting Mathias into her and Kaiser’s lives which I completely understood and respected.

Our father’s love for drug dealing destroyed our mother and ultimately destroyed a part of our lives when we lost her. Our father couldn’t be trusted so Gabi probably felt that Mathias couldn’t be trusted either. She hadn’t told me that she didn’t trust him but she didn’t need to. I knew my sister better than I knew myself sometimes which was how I knew how she truly felt about our uncle.

At the end of the day, I would never force Gabi to be around Mathias. It would be her decision to make and her decision alone.

“I definitely already know the answer to my next question but I’m going to ask it anyway because I want to hear you tell me what I already know… how do you feel about Jordana?”

Mathias slowly smiled and lightly shook his head.

“I like her,” he revealed. “I like her a lot, son.”

My heart not only warmed at him admitting his opinion about Jordana but it also warmed because of the name he’d decided to call me.

Son.

Two days had passed since my uncle and Jordana had met. And today I’d decided to spend some quality time with Mathias. We were in the comfort of his home, inside our usual spot, his man cave, and sipping on his expensive ass cognac.

“I’m glad you like her, Unc,” I replied, reaching forward for my glass on the center coffee table. “Because she likes you too.”

I lifted my cup to my lips and while the brown liquor slid inside me, Mathias spoke.

“As she should, I’m fucking amazing,” he said, making me arch a brow at him while I sipped.

He chuckled. “But seriously, I really do like her. You did your thing finding a woman like her. She’s not only gorgeous on the outside but on the inside too. I can see exactly why she has your ass so whipped.”

I chuckled and let my glass sit on my lap.

“I’m glad you have her, Genesis.”

“I’m really glad to have her too.”

“And I don’t say this enough but I really am proud of you,” he informed me, sincerity shining in his brown pools. “You started your own business from the ground up, without your father’s name and though you didn’t need to protect the game from your sister, you did protect her from all the hardships in her life. I’m so proud of you.”

I was actually shocked by him saying that he was proud of me but also extremely gassed. I hadn’t ever heard him tell me that he was proud of me. Hearing him say it now was a feeling like no other.

“I really do appreciate you, uncle. Thank you so much.”

“No problem, kid. I’m just saying it how it is. You know me, that’s just what I do.”

I nodded, watching him reach for the Courvoisier bottle on the center table. He began to refill our glasses and I leaned back, feeling a wave of

relaxation enter me.

One thing about cognac, it truly knew how to get me in a mellow mood.

“I’ll do anything to protect the ones I love,” I announced seconds later.

Another thing about the yak, it had me pouring out the truths of my life. With just the right amount of liquor, I could easily turn into a motor mouth.

“As you should,” Mathias replied, nodding gently. “I know you weren’t the biggest fan of your father but one thing he always made sure of was that you and your sister were protected. Even when you both moved out of the family home, he never took his eyes off either one of you. He instilled that protective nature into you, Gene, whether you refuse to admit it or not, he did.”

There was no point in me trying to refute Mathias’s words because I knew they were true. My father’s failure to choose the normal life over the game didn’t change the fact that he was a protector. It just sucked that he’d been keener on protecting us from outside threats in the game rather than getting out the game entirely.

“And I’m sure you can understand the hard decisions he’d made because you too had to make hard decisions especially when it came to Gabrielle.”

“Yeah,” I admitted. “I can.”

“But you did what had to be done, son. No one touches our family and gets away with it, right?”

“No one,” I confirmed. “And if I had to do it all again I would. Gabi and Kaiser deserve nothing but the best out of life and I’ll always be here to make sure that happens.”

“As you should,” Mathias said with firm nods. “As you should.”

It wasn’t long till we finished our glasses of cognac and my uncle being the undercover alcoholic that he was, quickly poured me another glass.

One thing about me, if you offer me a drink, I’ma take it. Besides, it was always fun drinking with my uncle. With him I could always be myself and we could talk for hours and hours about any and everything. We’d become a lot closer and I was proud of how our relationship was blossoming more and more each day.

The fact that I even felt comfortable enough to talk a little bit about what I’d done to protect Gabrielle and Kaiser spoke volumes about the trust I was developing for Mathias. He knew what I’d done three years ago because my father had told him. Though I’d kept my distance from my

father, I'd enlisted his help a few months prior to his death because I needed help getting rid of a body.

I loved my sister to death but one thing I couldn't deny was that she had the worst taste in men. The two guys she'd dated in high school? Horrible. And the man she'd met at college and allowed to impregnate her? I was still convinced that he was the very devil himself.

I felt no ways about him no longer being alive because the things he'd done to my sister? Unforgivable. And if I had to take him out again, I'd do it in a heartbeat. No one hurts the people that I love and gets away with it.

Absolutely no one.

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jordana

SPELLBINDING .

It was the number one word I could think of to describe these past few weeks. I'd been placed under the greatest spell of them all.

Genesis's spell.

These past few weeks had been everything I needed them to be. From going out on dates with Genesis, getting to know him on a much deeper level to meeting his uncle – it all had been spellbinding.

The more time I spent with Genesis, the more I was certain that he was the right man for me. He never failed to give me good advice, he never failed to uplift me and he never failed to put a smile on my face. I knew that relationships weren't perfect but with Genesis things had been pretty much perfect. We'd had that one little hiccup with my jealousy toward him and Sienna but other than that our relationship was perfect.

We'd been creating so many new memories together and I honestly couldn't wait to make so much more. We weren't even a year into our relationship but we'd been out the country together and it'd been the trip of a lifetime.

Genesis surprising me with a trip to Budapest had been one of the sweetest things someone had ever done for me. Budapest was a stunning city and I don't remember ever getting tired of exploring the city with Genesis, trying new food and shopping.

I'd tried to remain frugal during our shopping trip but that didn't last long once we pulled up to Louis Vuitton and Genesis told the shop attendant to bring out all the new season handbags. Of course, I protested the whole time but it was pointless. When Genesis wanted to spoil me there

was nothing I could do to stop him and I ended up leaving the LV store with five new handbags, three new pair of shoes and four fragrances. If my nigga wanted to blow a bag on me, I could only be a willing vessel and let him spoil me rotten.

I swear that man is truly something special.

As much as I loved being spoiled by my man, our relationship wasn't just about money. Genesis being rich was just a bonus but it wasn't why I stayed with him. He was a genuine soul and I loved experiencing life with him. I loved being with him.

"Okay, girl, I see you rocking that Chanel bag, looking like a fucking boss!"

I laughed before saying, "Ky, please stop gassing me. You know I'm just a regular girl."

"Regular?" She scoffed. "Bitch, you're rocking a four-figure purse and you're talking about being regular. Girl shut up! You're a bad bitch! Be proud!"

Now that I'd had a few weeks away from Aubrey's salon, I'd been able to make a decision about whether or not I wanted to stay at her salon.

I wanted to stay.

I loved my work environment and going independent just wasn't the right fit for me right now. Yeah Aubrey and I had our problems in the past but I was positive that things were going to improve now that she knew how I'd been feeling.

And now that I was back at the salon, things had definitely improved and for that I was grateful. Having problems with Aubrey was the last thing that I wanted and thankfully, the first week of me being back had run smoothly. The girls had missed me and I'd missed them too.

I'd told Kymani about my decision to stay at Aubrey's last weekend and to my surprise, she was on the same page as me. Apparently since I'd voiced to Aubrey the issues I was having with her; it'd allowed Aubrey to be much softer on the girls and more laidback. Kymani no longer felt the same way she'd felt about Aubrey being jealous of us. Honestly, I'd never agreed with Kymani's opinion about Aubrey being jealous of us, I just felt that she was too harsh and coming across as a dictator rather than a partner. I was glad that things were changing for the better though.

Today was Friday, my last working day in the salon and Aubrey had told me that she wanted to have a discussion with me at the end of the day.

She'd already assured me that it wasn't anything bad which I was glad about because having an argument at the end of what had been such a great week was a big no no.

"When did you get a new Chanel bag, honey? It's looking too good!"

It was a gift," I told Kymani as I cleaned my workstation.

I'd finished my second client of the day, Amber, not too long ago. She'd wanted a sew in with a side part and loose curls. Now that she was gone I was cleaning my workstation and I would be taking my lunch break once I was done cleaning.

Kymani was the first person who spoke on the bag I'd decided to rock to work this morning. As soon as I stepped through the door she'd gassed me up and now that hours had passed, she'd brought it up again which I didn't mind because I was proud of the bag.

Genesis had surprised me with the Chanel bag on the night that I met his uncle. I couldn't believe he'd gotten me my first ever Chanel bag. A Chanel gold classic medium double flap bag. It was one of my dream bags too and I really couldn't believe that he'd bought it for little old me.

"A gift?" I could hear the curiosity in Kymani's voice.

I looked up from the seat I'd been wiping down to stare into the cognac eyes of Kymani.

"Yeah, girl," I coyishly replied.

"From who?"

My lips curled like flames as I said, "My man."

Those two words were all it took to attract the attention of the other hairstylists. They all left their stations and quickly surrounded me. They too were all finished with their second clients of the day who had left shortly after my client had left.

"Your what!" Kymani yelled.

"Oh my God, you're off the market, J?" Taylor asked. "I know that's right!"

"Okay, sis! I now know for sure that your man definitely knows how to treat you right! You've been glowing all week, babe," Aja voiced.

"Girl, does he have a brother?" Leilani asked. "I'm tryna be smiling all the time like you!"

All I could do was laugh and smile as they bombarded me with questions and compliments. I thanked them all and briefly explained how

I'd met my man through a client. They all seemed really happy for me and this was just one of the many things I'd missed having.

A sisterhood.

It was while I was talking that the sound of the front door opening was heard and my eyes drifted away from the girls to the door and when I locked eyes on the king entering the salon, I truly believed that my heart was going to stop.

Summer, Aubrey's assistant, who was sitting behind the circular reception desk was the first to address him. "Hello, can I help you?"

"I have a special delivery for Ms. Evans," he explained, looking at Summer for only a brief moment before fixing his eyes on me. Those sexy ass eyes that knew how to pull me in every single time.

His gaze was so deep, so intensive that my whole body shuddered and the urge to feel his plump lips against mine hit me quick. I noticed the large bouquet of red roses in his hand and I remained speechless seeing him standing on the other side of the large space.

"I figured I'd surprise her with roses and treat not only her but all her co-workers too."

The girls turned around to face Genesis just as the door opened behind him. He moved out the way as uniformed people walked in with what looked like food bags. The enticing smell of cooked food filled the salon and Aja was the first one to speak up.

"Oh my God, that smells too good! Not you bringing a whole feast in here!"

Aja loved her food so I wasn't surprised by her reaction. I mean we all loved our food and I was sure that the girls were just as hungry as I was right now.

"You're all such hardworking women and I figured you could all use a treat which is why I brought a few of my staff down here to serve you with some of the dishes from my restaurant."

"Genesis…"

Now I could no longer keep silent and I could no longer allow the current distance between us to remain.

"Baby…" I released a gentle, blissful sigh. "You… you shouldn't have."

"Oh my… that's your man, J?" I heard Taylor ask as I moved toward him.

Her question was answered when Genesis met me halfway and placed a hand on my waist while his other hand held onto the beautiful rose bouquet he'd gotten for me. He knew how much I loved roses and he never failed to surprise me with some every week. This was just the first time he'd hand delivered them while I was at work.

"You know I had to, sweetheart. You're mine, there's no way I can't surprise and spoil you. I got you always, you know that."

He then dipped his head and branded his lips to mine, causing "Awwws" to fill the room from the girls standing behind me.

"What's smelling so damn good in here?" I heard Aubrey ask and I reluctantly pulled away from Genesis to turn to see her walking into the room.

"My boyfriend decided to treat us all to lunch today with food from his restaurant," I carefully explained. "I hope you don't mind, Aubrey."

"Of course, I don't mind," she replied, smiling wide as she came closer to Genesis and I. "That's so sweet of you, Mr.?"

"Call me Genesis," he told her. "It's a pleasure to finally meet you."

"The pleasure is all mine. Thank you so much for lunch."

All the girls began to thank him and he sent warm smiles their way.

"Yeah we *really* do appreciate you doing this for us, Genesis," Kymani thanked him last.

I should have noticed the way Genesis's smile left his eyes at the sight of her but because of my excited thoughts distracting me, I didn't notice it.

He simply nodded without saying a word and when his eyes fell on me, I lifted my head and pressed a quick peck to his lips that caused his smile to widen.

"Let me not hold y'all up from enjoying your lunch," he stated before addressing Aubrey. "Is it cool if my staff dish out the food in your lunchroom?"

"Yes, of course. Please right this way." Aubrey began to lead Genesis's staff to the lunchroom.

"Enjoy your lunch, baby," he said to me while passing the roses to me and I happily took them from him.

"Thank you so much, Gene."

I was sure that all the smiling I was doing was surely going to leave permanent smile lines on my face.

“You know there’s no way I’m letting you get away with this surprise, right?” I whispered in a tone loud enough for him to catch. “You’re all mine tonight.”

“Is that right?” His dark eyes filled with lust.

“Yes,” I confirmed. “I want you at my house tonight. Eight p.m. Don’t be late.”

“And if I’m late?”

“You’ll miss the surprise I have planned for you and that would be a big shame.”

“I won’t be late,” he promised.

“Good boy,” I praised him and he pinned me with a feral look that told me all I needed to know about how he felt hearing me call him a good boy.

I let out a giggle before giving him another kiss. Then he left me to head to the lunchroom to check on how his employees were doing with dishing out the food.

When he was gone, all the girls including Aubrey’s assistant, Summer, rushed over to me and started gassing up my relationship with Genesis.

I thanked them all and it wasn’t long ‘til Genesis and his employees were finished in the lunchroom. They all came out, said their goodbyes, and headed for the door. Genesis was the last one out the door and before he left, he gave me one last hug and kiss then told the girls goodbye.

“See you later, Daddy,” I told him as he walked to the door.

He looked over his shoulder and shot a sexy wink at me. And once he was gone, all the girls including Aubrey were gassing me again about my relationship with Genesis. We then headed to the lunchroom to enjoy the feast Genesis had brought for us.

I still didn’t know what I’d done to have a man as great as him in my life but I was truly thankful for him. And I wouldn’t stop thanking God each day for blessing me with a gem like Genesis Washington.

Hours later and I was back home, preparing the surprise I had planned for Genesis. Tonight, was all about him and I wanted to show him just how much I truly appreciated him. Tonight, I’d be treating him to a home cooked meal that he wouldn’t have to lift a finger to eat because I’d be feeding him

and once he was well rested from the meal, I'd be taking him to the bedroom where I would give him a full body massage with some edible oil that I'd ordered recently.

Tonight, I wanted him to feel like the king that he was. He deserved to be catered to and I wasn't going to hesitate on treating him right. After the way he made me feel everyday like I was the best woman in the world, he deserved this and so much more.

As I prepared Genesis's garlic butter shrimp and white rice, my thoughts drifted to the conversation I'd had with Aubrey at the end of the work today.

"I've been thinking about this for a while, Jordana, and I'd like to make you my manager."

"Wait… what? Your manager?"

"Yes, honey. The manager of this salon. I told you that I see myself in you and I truly mean that Jordana. You have that same drive that I had when I was your age. I see the way you are during our meetings, always coming up with great ideas. I can admit I've been extra hard on you out of all the girls because you're the one I see myself in the most. You're the one I want managing the salon.

"These past few weeks with you gone was something that affected not just the girls but me too. The salon felt different without you, Jordana… and not the good kind of different, the bad kind. Like the shop was missing its spark. You bring life into the salon. You encourage the girls and you put a smile on their face. They love you and so do I.

"I'll be forty soon and I'd like to take a partial retirement. I've been doing this for over twenty years and as much as I love it, I'm finally ready to start taking a break and truly enjoy the fruits of my labor. I want you taking over the salon and as the new manager it's only right I give you fifty percent ownership of the salon."

"Fifty what?"

"Fifty percent, Jordana."

"Oh my… You're serious, right? This isn't some kind of prank?"

"No, it isn't a prank, honey. I'm serious. So serious that if you say yes the salon's name will be changed to reflect our new partnership. AJ's Artistry's has a nice ring to it, don't you think?"

"Oh my God… Aubrey… I don't… I don't know what to say. But what about the other girls? Wouldn't they feel some type of way about you

choosing me over them?"

"I've already spoken to the girls about my decision. They're all very much fine with it. Especially Kymani."

"Wow."

"You don't have to make a decision right now, Jordana. There's no rush. Just promise me you'll think about it."

I told her that I would definitely think about it and let her know my decision. When I'd asked her how soon she needed to know my answer, she told me not to worry about the time and that I should just tell her when I was ready.

Honestly, I didn't need much time because I'd known my answer from the very second she'd asked me. I—

The sound of a key opening my door suddenly pulled me out of my thoughts and my heart skittered when I realized that Genesis had arrived earlier than planned. The mounted clock on my living room wall told me that the time was 7:40 p.m.

Yes he had a key to my home and I had a key to both his homes. We spent way too much time around each other for us to not have a key to each other's homes. I started shaking my head and smiling as I walked out my kitchen to greet Genesis once he'd opened the door. But imagine my surprise when I heard deep, familiar voices and the door fully opened to reveal the three people I wasn't expecting to see tonight.

"Something smells good as fuck up in here," Jaiden stated with a grin.

"Yo, you cooked for us, Peanut?" Jaxson asked.

"We actually brought over your favorite wings but it's cool. More food for us all to grub on," Jasiel voiced.

They all stepped into my home but I stood in their way and looked at them with confusion.

"Well damn, it's nice to see your ugly ass too," Jaiden teased.

"Sorry, what are the three of you doing here?"

"The fuck you mean what are we doing here?" Jaiden scowled. "And why you wearing your robe like you 'bout to go to sleep?"

"Don't tell me you forgot, Peanut," Jaxson said.

"She forgot," Jasiel stated matter of factly.

I eyed them closely and took a look at the white plastic bags in their hands. When I got a glimpse of a large packet of popcorn in the bag Jaxson held, my chest tightened.

“Shit,” I cursed.

I’d honestly forgotten. Life had been so busy for me these past few weeks and I’d been making so many great memories with Genesis that I’d forgotten about the very important night coming up with my brothers. It was my turn to host movie night this month and I’d completely forgotten. Now I felt like shit for forgetting about such an important moment with my brothers. It was our chance to bond as siblings and the one night every month we knew not to miss. I’d gone against the grain by forgetting our commitment to one another.

“How could you forget about the one night that we have every single month?” Jaiden sucked his teeth before walking past me to enter my kitchen on the left.

Jasiel slowly shook his head at me whereas Jaxson gave me a calm look.

“Well, we’re here now,” Jaxson said, stepping forward to make his way to the kitchen. “Let’s just get our night started.”

“I can’t,” I suddenly blurted out with a heavy heart.

All three of them shot a confused gaze my way.

“I have plans,” I explained in a low tone.

“With who?” Jaxson queried.

“Cancel them,” Jasiel ordered.

“Hold the fuck up… why you got rose petals sprinkled all over your living room floor?” Jaiden asked and my heart rate shot up so fast I was certain a heart attack was near.

“Nah, there ain’t just rose petals on the damn floor… are those candles?” Jasiel questioned as he moved past me to take a closer look at my living room. Jaxson followed him and even Jaiden walked out the kitchen so he could also get a closer look.

I slowly turned around and sighed heavily as I observed the three of them examining what I’d done.

In my living room, I’d decided to set up a picnic type setting. I’d moved my center coffee table out the way and laid out a blanket and pillows for Genesis and I to sit on. I wanted to feed him while we sat on my living room floor with rose petals and candles all around us in a heart shape. It was kind of corny but still cute. And underneath the robe I currently wore was the newest lingerie set I’d bought for Genesis that I planned to surprise him with when he opened the door. The only thing was, I hadn’t expected

my brothers to see what I'd set up and now that they were seeing it from where they stood in my front foyer, I was mortified.

This was the con of having an apartment with a living room and kitchen that was basically one whole room. You could see everything from my front fucking door!

This wasn't the day that I wanted my brothers to meet Genesis. I wanted it to be properly planned and a day that they could get to know each other. Not on a random night like this!

I could no longer look my brothers in the eye so I lowered my gaze to the white oak flooring below us.

"Hello earth to Jordana," Jasiel called out to me. "I hope you don't think not looking at us is suddenly going to make you invisible. We can still see you."

"Yeah we can definitely see that Peanut shaped head," Jaiden commented with a light laugh and I fought the urge to flip him the bird.

My brothers teasing me when we were in our teenage years about having a Peanut shaped head (which was one hundred percent false by the way) was how I'd gotten the nickname Peanut.

"Who is he?" The seriousness laced in Jasiel's tone made me look up and stare at him.

"And why haven't we met him yet?" Jaiden intervened.

"Well, we're definitely meeting him tonight," Jaxson announced and I immediately started shaking my head 'no'.

"You'll meet him sometime soon but not tonight."

Jasiel's face hardened. "Why the hell not?"

"I don't want you three ambushing him tonight," I explained. "He deserves to know *when* and *where* he's meeting the three of you."

"Oh, she's scared we about to scare that nigga off." Jaiden chuckled.

"Good. I want him scared. Ain't no pussy ass nigga about to be in my sister's life anyway. We're staying."

"Jasiel, no. You can't."

"You're not only cooking for this nigga, you've got rose petals sprinkled all over the fucking floor like you're about to marry this nigga and you're in a robe which tells me you're comfortable around this guy. *Very* comfortable. But not comfortable enough to let him meet your brothers?" He glared at me. "Make that make sense, Jordana, because it don't. *We. Are. Staying."*

I immediately shot him a frosty look. “I know you love acting like my father all the time but let me remind you of the fact that I am very much capable of making my own decisions and setting my own rules. I am also very much older than the three of you. Tonight, is not the night I want you meeting him so please just respect my decision and leave.”

Silence filled the room but the tension that had formed between Jasiel and I was so thick you could cut it with a knife. He refused to back down from staring at me and I refused to stop looking at him too. I needed him to respect my decision. I didn’t want my brothers meeting Genesis tonight. Genesis deserved to know when he would be meeting my brothers. This looked and felt like an ambush and I didn’t want my man uncomfortable.

Just as Jaxson said the words, “A’ight, we’re leaving,” I heard a key in the door and my entire body froze as the door was pushed open.

“Hey, my love,” *his* baritone sent a tingle down my body. “I’m on time just like you wanted…” He paused and I just knew he was shocked by the three burly men in my apartment. “Shit… I didn’t know you had company, baby?”

I heard Genesis’s footsteps enter my home and just when I plucked up the strength to turn to him, Jasiel suddenly sucked his teeth so damn loud I almost wanted to slap him.

“There’s no way in hell that you’re dating this nigga,” Jasiel commented and I looked over at him like he’d lost his mind.

“Excuse me?”

“You heard me,” Jasiel snapped at me. “You’re not dating him.”

“As a matter of fact, she is,” Genesis said from behind me as he shut my door. “What’s it to you?”

“Nigga, I know who you are,” Jasiel replied, shooting a dirty look at Genesis. “You might not know who I am but I know exactly who you are.”

“Let me go ahead and apologize now for giving you the impression that you can speak to me in that tone. You clearly need to learn how to show some respect,” Genesis told him and that was enough to make Jasiel step forward with a fire in his eyes.

“What the hell did you just say to me?” Jasiel asked him rudely.

“A’ight, let’s just all chill,” Jaxson calmly intervened and grabbed Jasiel’s arm, stopping him from going any further.

“No, I ain’t gon’ fucking chill,” Jasiel retorted, shrugging Jaxson off. “Not when my sister’s fucking the son of a god damn kingpin.”

“What?” Jaiden spoke up. “Whose son?”

“Remember that one case I told y’all about years ago,” Jasiel said directly to my brothers. “About that major kingpin that just kept slipping under the radar?”

This was the first time I’d ever hated what my brother did for a living. His job as a DEA agent had come along and torpedoed my entire world this evening.

“You mean, KP?” Jaxson queried.

“Isn’t he dead?” Jaiden asked.

“He sure is,” Jasiel revealed. “But his bitch ass son sure ain’t. We’re standing right in front of him.”

“Jasiel!” I shot him a furious glance.

Genesis let out a cold, hollow chuckle before stating, “Let that be the first and last time you ever have the audacity to call me a bitch, ‘cause if I hear it come out your mouth again I promise you, I’m fucking you up in front of your sister and your brothers.”

“Come fuck me up then. I’d love to see you try, *bitch* ,” Jasiel ordered.

All hell broke loose after that and I was taken to a scene I never thought in a million years I’d ever see.

My brother and my boyfriend having a war.

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genesis

"COME FUCK ME UP THEN. I'd love to see you try, *bitch* ."

The next thing I knew, I was rushing over to where Jordana's brothers stood, prepared to step to the man that had foolishly thought it was wise to disrespect me. Unfortunately, I didn't get to my desired destination because of the blockage in my way.

"Gene, I'm gonna need you to calm down."

The woman who owned my heart.

"Nah, let that mothafucka pass! He can't do shit to me."

"Jordana, I'm only going to tell you this once. Please move out of my way."

I wasn't even looking down at her as I spoke. The only person I had my sight set on was Jasiel.

"Genesis, you know I can't do that," Jordana's soothing voice melted into my ear drums.

Even with how soothing her voice was it didn't change my current mission. It didn't soothe the anger crashing through me right now. Jasiel had called me out of my name three times now and I didn't have it in me to let it slide. I couldn't let it slide! This nigga claimed to know me when he didn't know shit! All he knew was that I was Kylan Porter's son and that apparently made me guilty by association. That was bullshit and I wasn't about to let him think he could just freely attack my character with no repercussions.

I didn't need Jasiel to explain how he thought he "knew" who I was because I had a very strong idea from the words he'd said already. It was

clear that he worked for law enforcement and the fact that he knew about my father told me that he was a DEA agent.

A few months after my father had died, I'd found out from an associate in the FBI that a few DEA agents were investigating me. They were convinced that I'd inherited my father's drug empire since it was still a smooth sailing ship since my father's death. I wasn't worried about their little investigation because I knew it wouldn't lead anywhere and I was right because less than a month later, my associate told me that they'd stopped investigating me. I wasn't sure if Jasiel was one of the agents who had been investigating me but he definitely knew about the investigation which also explained his dislike toward me.

"Let the bitch boy come," Jasiel taunted, anger pouring from his eyes. "He's a piece of shit who deserves the beat down I'm gonna give him today."

"Jasiel, will you please shut the hell up!" Jordana yelled over her shoulder. "I'm not going to allow you to keep talking crazy to my man!"

"Fuck your man!" Jasiel fired back, making every muscle inside me tense up. "I already told you that you're not dating this nigga and I mean that shit!"

"You don't even know him, Jasiel! Why are you being so mean?"

"I know enough," he said, cutting his eyes at me. "His father was responsible for countless people losing their lives because of an addiction he helped them keep up. Kylan Porter was a beast in the streets, the most ruthless kingpin this city has ever seen and he was able to stay in the shadows for the entire duration of his disgusting drug dealing career. Even though he's now dead, his operation remains at the largest it's ever been and though there's no evidence, I'm still positive that his son is the one pulling all the strings."

"That's a lie and you know it," I told him. "I cut all ties with my father when my mother died eleven years ago. She took her own life because my father loved the game more than he loved her. I vowed to never put myself in a career that not only destroys lives but destroyed my mother's life too."

"Well, I don't buy none of that whack ass sob story of yours because there's no way you haven't benefited from the drug money your stupid little daddy made. He was an evil, money hungry person and I'm pretty sure your bitch as—"

"Genesis, no!"

Jasiel had called me a bitch one too many times and as much as I wanted to respect Jordana's home, I could no longer do that. I wasted no time in carefully moving Jordana to the side before storming over to where Jasiel stood in the middle of his brothers.

When Jasiel saw me coming, he quickly came toward me, shrugging off one of his brothers who had attempted to hold him back. As soon as he was close enough, I swung and landed my first blow in the center of his face.

That was all it took for Jasiel to start swinging too and we were now continuously throwing punches each other's way. I bobbed and weaved as I avoided his punches but kept my guard up as I delivered hard hits to his lower abdomen. Jordana wouldn't stop shouting and screaming for us to stop but I had no choice but to drown her out as I yanked Jasiel toward me and wrapped my arm around his neck. He now stood in front of me with his back facing me and though he was trying his hardest to get out of my grip, he wasn't going anywhere unless I wanted him to.

"Get the fuck off me, bitch!"

"Jaiden! Jaxson! Do something for Christ's sake! Stop them!"

"Come on, sis. We gotta get you out of here. You don't need to be seeing this."

"What do you… Jaxson, put me down right now! Jaxson, no! They need to stop fighting! Let me the fuck go!"

Despite my arm being wrapped around Jasiel's neck that didn't stop him from using his elbow to administer hit after hit to my stomach. And I couldn't even lie, this nigga had strength because I could feel wind being knocked out of me each time.

He then reached for my forearm and began trying to pull it off but I kept my tight hold on him. I applied pressure to his neck and did the sleeper choke hold move on Jasiel. I could feel him starting to fall limp but just when I was able to put him to sleep, I felt a large arm lock around my neck and a hand grab my shoulder.

"Let him the fuck go, Genesis," one of Jordana's brothers ordered from behind me. "Unless you want me tag teaming my brother and making sure you leave here with a few broken bones, I suggest you stop."

A part of me wanted to keep on squeezing. Just to prove a point and let Jasiel know that I wasn't the nigga to play with. He had no idea who I was and what I was capable of doing.

All the insults he'd hurled my way since I'd stepped foot in Jordana's home had my head boiling with so much fury that I could see nothing but red. I could hear the blood rushing through my head and I was clenching my jaw so tight that it hurt. But the satisfaction I was feeling from slowing down Jasiel's blood supply to his brain was easing my irritation with each passing second.

"Genesis, I ain't about to repeat myself," Jordana's brother said. "If you truly care about my sister, you'll let Jasiel go."

And that was all it took for me to release Jasiel. He started gasping and choking for air.

My body was pulled backward then I was suddenly pushed toward the front door. I turned to see Jordana's brother, the one that looked the youngest out of three, pointing at the door with an unrelenting stare.

I held his gaze for a moment before looking away and turning around to head to the door. Without putting up a fight or saying a word, I tore open Jordana's door, walked out, and slammed the door behind me. Anger still seared through me and I wasn't able to subside it.

During the walk to my car downstairs, I couldn't stop thinking about all the names Jasiel had called me, the way he'd looked at me like I was scum of the earth and most importantly the way he'd dissed my whole relationship with Jordana like it'd meant nothing.

I'd tried to explain myself but it was clear that Jasiel wasn't trying to hear any of it. He'd already made his mind up about what type of man I was because of my late father. He would never accept me and that ultimately meant that he would never accept my relationship with Jordana.

I would never want the woman of my dreams to have to choose between me and her brother. But it seemed like if I'd decided to stay in her life, she would have to choose. And even though I'd want her to choose me, I wouldn't want her to resent me for the rest of our lives together. I couldn't allow that. I also couldn't allow Jasiel to think it was okay to disrespect me because of who he believed I was.

Was it even a good idea for me to stay with Jordana?

Her brother hating me wasn't even the worst part of the predicament between Jordana and I. The worst part was that I'd messed around with her co-worker Kymani. A woman I didn't even know that Jordana knew. I also hadn't known what Kymani did for a living because I'd never asked. I'd

never cared to ask. And now it'd come back to bite me in the butt because her and Jordana were co-workers.

When I'd first stepped foot in Aubrey's Artistry, I didn't even notice Kymani. I'd been too focused on my baby and excited to see her reaction to me surprising her at work. It was only when her co-workers started thanking me that I spotted Kymani and discomfort stirred inside of me. I immediately noticed the way she scanned me thoroughly and even when I stopped looking at her, I could still feel her eyes on me. She hadn't made it known to everyone that we knew each other and for that I was glad because if she'd tried to make a scene in front of Jordana, I wouldn't hesitate to put her in her place and remind her that she was nothing but a fuck buddy. What we'd had was nothing serious, nothing concrete and nothing real. We'd just had good sex but she knew from the jump that I'd never wanted anything more with her.

I'd planned to reveal my past with Kymani to Jordana at some point tonight but of course the situation with Jasiel meant that I couldn't. Now I didn't know what the hell I was going to do and honestly, I was too damn pissed to think about Kymani. I'd been disrespected tonight and I couldn't stand it. One of the main things my father had instilled into me was to never allow another man to disrespect me and it'd happened. Jordana's own brother had disrespected me and I couldn't lie, if it wasn't for the fact that he was related to Jordana, getting rid of him wouldn't be something that I'd have to think about. I'd just get it done.

Was this a sign that my relationship with Jordana wasn't meant to be? Was this a sign that I couldn't be with a woman who had a brother who hated me? And lastly, was this a sign that I'd made a big mistake falling in love with Jordana Evans?

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jordana

I PACED UP and down my bedroom, constantly throwing glares at the man who stood by my door with his arms crossed over his chest. He remained unmoved by my stares, much to my displeasure. The sound of my front door slamming was heard and I quickly rushed over to the exit.

"Jaxson, move."

"Jorda—"

"I said move!" My yell was clearly enough to knock some sense into him and he stepped out the way for me to reach for my doorknob and tear the door open.

Straight away I locked eyes on Jaiden who idly stood by my kitchen and when I looked over at the man wiping the droplets of blood falling from his nose, I didn't hesitate to rush over to him and get all up in his face.

"You are fucking unbelievable! You not only disrespected my boyfriend, but you also disrespected me!"

"Chill with all that yelling, Jordana," I heard Jaiden warn me but I ignored him while keeping a fixed gaze on Jasiel.

Jasiel who kept a stoic expression while looking me dead in the eye. Not only was his nose bleeding, his left eye was slightly bruised too but I had no sympathy for him. Not when he'd hurt me in the worst way by verbally and physically attacking my man.

"If you think that how you feel about Genesis is going to change my feelings for him, you're very much mistaken. Genesis is who I want to be with and there's nothing you can do to change that!"

Jasiel didn't say a word and his silence should've scared me but it didn't. It only encourage me to keep shouting at him and jabbing my finger

in his face. Two things I knew he hated women doing to him but tonight I didn't care.

"Just because our father left our lives that doesn't give you the right to act like you're my father! I am grown and free to make my own damn decisions! Who I choose to love ain't none of your God damn business!"

His eyes grew large. "There's no way in hell I just heard you use the word love, Jordana. You can't love that nigga."

"Well, I do," I confirmed with my head held high. "I love him."

Jasiel's eyes squeezed into thin slits. "He's the son of a kingpin! You can't love him!"

"I love him and there's nothing you can do or say to change that, Jasiel. Genesis may be the son of a *dead* drug dealer but Genesis Washington, the man I love, is not a dealer. He never has been and he never will be. He's an honest and noble man who used the money his mother left him and his sister to go to college, get a degree and built his business from the ground up.

"You don't know that man, Jordana! He's only told you what you want to hea—"

"That's where you're wrong," I interjected. "I know Genesis. I know everything about his past. He told me everything and I trust him. He has no reason to lie to me because he trusts me too."

"I really can't believe you'd be dumb enough to fall for his tricks and charm. You really think he doesn't dabble in a lifestyle that almost made his fucked up father a billionaire? You really think he doesn't run point on the whole organization?"

"I know he isn't running shit because I've met the man who is," I blurted out in a fit of rage.

As soon as I said it, I cursed myself internally and pressed my lips together.

"The fuck you just say?" Jaiden queried in a menacing tone.

"I know damn well she didn't just say what I think she said," Jaxson voiced and I caught the sudden note of hardness in his baritone.

"What?" Jasiel stared at me incredulously. "You met who?"

"Nobody," I muttered.

"No speak the hell up," Jasiel demanded. "If that fool has you around mothafuckas you're not supposed to be around I'm gonna kill him myself."

“You ain’t gonna do shit, nigga,” I fired back and Jasiel’s eyes were suddenly cold as ice.

This time his silence scared me. My heart raced inside my chest so fast that it hurt and I suddenly got the desire to be far away from my brother. By no means was I afraid of Jasiel Evans but sometimes, his reactions could come across as scary. And the words he spoke next were the scariest things I’d ever heard him say.

“You can keep up this little miss tough act up all you like, Jordana, but you know I mean every word I say. If you think I’m ever going to accept your relationship with that man, you are very much mistaken. I will never accept it and if you choose to continue to see him despite me telling you not to, I will not accept you in my life again until that nigga is in a jail cell where he belongs or with his father in hell.”

After his final words, he stormed past me and left my apartment. Leaving me with Jaxson and Jaiden.

I was speechless and couldn’t even muster the strength to look at my brothers. However, I didn’t have to look at them to know that they were coming over to me because I heard their footsteps. When I felt a hand pull me in close, I knew exactly who it was and the minute I fell into Jaxson’s arms, my chin trembled and my eyes immediately watered.

“It’s okay, Peanut… we got you,” I heard Jaiden whisper as he patted my shoulder.

Then the tears wouldn’t stop falling. They wouldn’t stop fucking falling and I was mad all over again for allowing Jasiel’s words to affect me this bad!

I couldn’t help it though. He was my brother and I loved him. I didn’t want to fight; I didn’t want to argue. I just wanted him to respect my relationship with Genesis. I just wanted him to understand that Genesis was nothing like his late father.

Why can’t he just listen to me?

My tears continued to fall and as I sobbed loudly into Jaxson’s chest, Jaxson rubbed on my back while Jaiden squeezed my shoulder tight. In this very moment that was all I needed. My two brothers comforting me and showing me that no matter what, they were there for me. I just wished Jasiel could be on the same page as them.

“We’re gonna talk to him, Peanut,” Jaxson promised me moments after my sobs had lessened.

“Yeah, we will. Don’t worry. He’ll come around,” Jaiden told me.

I wasn’t so sure about Jasiel coming around but I let the hope from my brothers’s words convince me otherwise. Jasiel had to come around. He couldn’t be like this forever. He was supposed to be my brother, my protector, one of my best friends. He couldn’t hate me.

Minutes later, my brothers each kissed my forehead, gave me a hug, said their goodbyes, and left my apartment. Leaving me all alone with my thoughts.

This had to be a nightmare! This couldn’t be happening. It just couldn’t be. How on earth had my life turned into a whole pile of dog shit in a matter of hours? I’d started off this day with a smile on my face and experienced a great day at work to only have this happen to me.

I’m sure the devil was laughing at how wrecked my life had become. My own brother hated my boyfriend who he’d met for the first time today. He’d had his own preconceived notions about Genesis and there had been nothing I could do to stop them.

I looked over at my living room floor and spotted the rose petals and candles that I’d laid out for Genesis. Tonight, was supposed to be such a special night for us and it’d been ruined. My stomach hardened when memories of Genesis’s face when Jasiel had called him out of his name flew into my head. How hurt he’d looked… how infuriated he’d looked. It broke my heart remembering how much my brother had managed to get under Genesis’s skin.

I need to be with him right now. He’s the only person I want to see.

I decided to stop wasting time feeling sorry for myself and head to the one person who I was certain I wanted to be with despite all the chaos that had gone down tonight.

After cleaning my living room up, I quickly changed into a tracksuit and sneakers. I then grabbed my purse, my keys, and my phone before rushing out the door.

Genesis and I had our locations turned on for one another on iMessage so I knew exactly where he was right now. I was glad that he hadn’t suddenly decided to hide his location from me out of anger.

The car drive to his home was tough. Lucky Daye’s *Love You Too Much* being the first song that played on my CarPlay didn’t help the situation at all. While Lucky sang his heart out on the track about his love, tears rushed down my cheeks as I thought about my love.

I hated everything about what had happened today. I hated that Jasiel had judged Genesis before today, I hated that they'd fought and I hated how tense things had become between Jasiel and I. Two men that I loved didn't like each other and I didn't know what I was going to do about it. I didn't know how I was going to fix this mess. But what I did know was that I wanted Genesis.

Genesis had told me all about his past way before tonight. I'd known about his father's reign as kingpin, his mother's suicide, how him and his sister cut ties with their father, how they'd changed their last names from Porter to Washington to honor their mother's maiden name, how he'd not once asked his father for financial help, his sister's abusive relationship and what he'd done to his sister's abuser. Yes I knew it all and it didn't make me want to run away from him. It only made me want to run straight into his arms.

The fact that Genesis had protected his sister from a monster who had beat her face until it was black and blue when she was six weeks pregnant with Kaiser and the fact that Genesis had become a better man than his father ever could be by building a legitimate multimillion dollar empire proved that he was a king. *My* king. And I really didn't want to be without him.

Fifteen minutes later and I'd pulled up to Genesis's home. I parked my car in his driveway and rushed out my car with my Chanel purse in one hand and his house key in the other. Once I stood in front of the double doors, I pushed the key into the door and let myself in. That familiar cedar and lavender scent filled my nostrils and warmth stirred in my chest at the smell that reminded me of him.

I kicked off my sneakers before frantically searching each room of his home, desperate to lay eyes on him. I just needed to know that he was okay and most of all, I needed to know if *we* were okay. I started on the first floor, searched his living room, wet bar, kitchen, dining room, theater room and even his wine closet. Then I was rushing upstairs, searching all the bedrooms, closets, en-suite bathrooms, and his office. Unfortunately, he was nowhere to be found and I could feel myself crumbling inside until I suddenly remembered where I hadn't checked.

His home gym.

Pow! Pow! Pow!

Walking down the steps of his basement and hearing loud punching and breathing noises as I got closer to the bottom of the stairs actually lifted my spirits. I'd finally found him. But when I got to the last step and was able to look into the large space, my spirits plummeted when I saw the rage burning in his eyes.

Pow! Pow! Pow!

"Genesis… baby…"

I expected my voice to make him stop punching on the heavy bag. I expected my voice to make him stop and look at me but he did no such thing. He just continued punching away like it was more important to him that I was.

"Genesis, I'm talking to you." I now stood at the bottom of the staircase. "Please don't ignore me."

Pow!

"What?" He snapped after his last punch which sent the bag swinging wildly. "What could you possibly want from me, Jordana?"

My heart seemed to plummet into the pit of my stomach and I couldn't stand to see the tightness in his eyes or how hostile his handsome face had become.

"I'm a kingpin's son remember?" He snapped, taking off the boxing gloves that he'd been wearing and tossing them to the floor.

"Genesis…"

"I'm a killer," he spat out. "And your brother doesn't want me anywhere near you."

I quickly stepped forward and replied, "I don't care what Jasiel thinks. I don't care who your father was. All I care about is you, Genesis."

He drew a deep, harsh breath while holding me hostage with his cold eyes. The more he breathed and silently stared at me, the more the coldness left his brown irises and after a few more seconds, his face had softened into a calmer look.

"I don't want you to have to choose between me and your brother, Jordana. I won't ever make you choose me over your family."

"You wouldn't have to make me choose anything because it's my choice to make." I stepped forward once again, anxious to close the gap between us.

This time when I stepped forward I didn't stop walking until I stood right in front of Genesis who stood on the other side of the room.

The sight of him shirtless with gray sweatpants on was a sight that sent shivers down my spine. Beads of sweat had formed on his forehead; sweat was dripping down his muscular chest and I couldn't control the way my body temperature was quickly rising. I was also impressed to not see a single scratch or any bruises on him. Clearly he'd been the champion in the war between him and Jasiel.

"I made the choice to be with you and I stand by my decision."

He slowly shook his head at me and I frowned.

"You and your brother may be at odds right now, Dana, but you respect and love him. He's a father figure to you and I know you don't want to lose him."

"He's not my father though. He's my brother and he should respect my decision to be with you."

"He only wants what's best for you, Jordana. He loves you."

"And I love him too but I also love you, Genesis."

My words made him freeze and any trace of anger in his brown pools vanished. I moved closer until I was able to reach for Genesis's hand and I placed it on the center of my chest.

"You feel that?"

He remained focused on me and slowly nodded.

"That's my heart that you own. You're the one I can't stop thinking about. You're the one I want to share all my news to, you're the one I want to be with every day. My heart beats for you, Genesis. You've made me feel like I can love again… and I have. I've fallen in love with you. I don't want to be without you. I love experiencing my life with you and I never want to stop experiencing life with you. You're a part of me, you uplift me, you motivate me and you cherish me like no other man ever could. Without you I'm lost, Gene, you're the light in my life. You light up my world every single day. It's you I need, baby. It's you today, tomorrow and every single day after that. I love you."

Seeing the love glowing in his eyes as he looked at me gassed me up like no other. He hadn't responded yet but he didn't need to because I could see from the look in his eyes that he was not only thrilled by what I'd said but he also felt the exact same way about me.

He was silent for a few more seconds, watching me carefully before granting me with a response that confirmed his feelings.

He loves me.

He closed the space between us and grabbed the sides of my face as he pressed his lips to mine. The kiss was everything I needed it to be and more. *Passionate. Lustful. Hungry. Wet. Nasty.*

It didn't take long for wetness to leak out of me and when Genesis's hands left my face so he could grab my thighs. It didn't take long for me to jump on him and allow him to lead us to a nearby weight bench. We were like two wild animals. Tonguing each other down nonstop and rubbing on one another, desperate for so much more.

Once I was placed down to the bench, Genesis pulled away from my lips for a brief moment so he could strip my clothes from my body. I was hungrily tugging at the waistband of his sweats, ready to be reunited with the part of him I needed inside of me.

"Uhhh, Gene."

"That's it, baby… let me feel that pussy take all this dick."

Within seconds, I sat on top of Genesis while he sat upright on the bench with his hands locked in place on my waist and his lips sucking on my breasts. I had my arms wrapped around his neck while I rode him and the tingles rushing through me were no joke.

"I love you," he whispered and my body instantly flooded with heat. "Too damn much, Dana."

"You… do?" I flashed him a teasing grin as I slowly slid myself to the top of his shaft before sliding back down.

"Fuck… yes." His grip on my waist tightened. "I do."

Up and down, I rode him, not once letting my eyes slip from his. I didn't want to miss seeing how good I made him feel and I didn't want him to miss seeing how good he made me feel. Good was even an understatement. Him being inside me right now felt fucking fantastic. And knowing how he felt about me felt better than anything I'd felt before.

Genesis was the man who had my heart and I wasn't going to allow anyone or anything to come between us from here on out. I loved him and I wanted to spend the rest of my life with him.

Nothing else mattered but Genesis Washington.

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genesis

WHAT GOOD IS a life if you can't be with the one you love?

The sliver of doubt that I'd allowed to creep into my mental was gone. I was no longer going to be a slave to any negative thoughts about my relationship with Jordana. She loved me and I loved her. I wanted to spend the rest of my life with her regardless of what anyone else thought about me.

A new day had arrived and waking up to see Jordana laying on my chest made my insides melt. This right here was everything I wanted… everything I needed. Waking up to the woman I loved was all I needed to get through this new day and all the days that were to come. The more I stared down at her, the more I felt blessed. She was beautiful, intelligent, independent, courageous, determined and she was all mine.

"All mine," I whispered as I caressed her soft body under the silk sheets.

We'd both fallen asleep naked last night which was no surprise after all the love making we'd been doing. Every round we'd had last night had been incredible. Too incredible. Who knew love could feel this good? Clearly I'd been missing out on how exhilarating it felt to be having sex with someone you loved but me missing out was now a thing of the past. Making love to Jordana was my new crack and I wanted a hit of her whenever I could.

"I love you," I said while watching her sleep.

She looked so at peace and I loved that. All I wanted was her happy and though I had no idea how I was going to fix things with her brother, I would

try my hardest to find a solution. Jasiel couldn't hate me forever. He couldn't…

My thoughts trailed off when Jordana's body began to stir under the sheets and when her eyes fluttered open, she slowly looked up to meet my gaze, making my lips lift into a smile.

"Good morning, beautiful."

"Morning, baby."

She returned my smile and slowly lifted her head from my chest. She then turned onto her stomach and came closer to me. Her lips captured mine and I immediately felt my arousal grow as she took possession of my mouth.

"Mmmh," I moaned, ready for so much and just as my hand grabbed Jordana's booty, she pulled away from me.

"After last night and this morning, I'm surprised you still have some energy left, Sir," she commented and I smirked.

"For you, my love, I'm always gonna have some energy." I pulled her toward me until I had her right where I wanted her. Laying on top of me.

There was just something about being skin to skin with Jordana that I couldn't describe. It was out of this world and I wanted to experience it daily.

She rested her head on my shoulder while I stroked her ass cheeks and kissed the top of her forehead a couple times. We remained in a blissful silence. Her hand stroking on my arm while I stroked on her booty. It was a silence that felt natural, loving, and peaceful. Even with no words being shared between us, we were still able to enjoy the moment.

"You got me saying some real corny shit last night, Gene," she spoke up moments later.

I tittered.

"You're lucky I love you because I've never told anyone that they light up my world. I really turned into the biggest simp."

You're my beautiful simp," I told her. "And for the record, I love how corny you are."

"Thank you, baby…" she sighed happily. "I have something to ask you… please don't get mad."

"I won't get mad. Tell me what's on your mind."

"Well… I know it's quite soon to ask… but how would you feel about being in the same room as Jasiel again?"

It wasn’t a question I’d been expecting just yet but I wasn’t about to back out from answering it.

“I won’t lie to you and say that I’m super eager to see him again because I’m not. He said a lot of hurtful shit to me last night.”

“He did and I’m sorry about what he said.”

“You have nothing to be sorry about, sweetheart. You had no idea how he felt toward me and there was no way, you could have predicted how ugly things would get between us.”

“I know but I still don’t like all the things he said. He’s judged you based on who your father was which is wrong. He definitely owes you an apology.”

“And so do I… I disrespected your home last night when I threw the first punch and I’m sorry, sweetheart.”

“You were angry, Gene. Rightfully so. You have nothing to apologize for. You were defending yourself.”

I kissed her forehead once more, grateful that I had her support.

“I just don’t want the two men I love at war forever. I don’t think I’ll be able to take it much longer.”

“Bad times don’t last forever, baby. I don’t want you stressing over this. I know it’s difficult not to but I just want you to remain positive. Fuck the stress, I want you at your best, Dana. Always.”

“You are too damn sweet, Gene… I’ll try my hardest not to stress about things. I promise.”

“That’s my girl.”

We then fell into a comfortable silence and continued to cuddle. All I wanted was Jordana happy and despite how hurt I was about what Jasiel had said to me, I couldn’t hate him. He was Jordana’s family. Hating him would be wrong and I could never do it. I wasn’t built like that at all. I cared too much about my karma and my soul to be going around hating other souls. It took too much energy to hate others and I didn’t want that shit on my conscience for the rest of my life.

Like I’d told Jordana, bad times didn’t last forever and I wholeheartedly believed that. All I could do was pray that this war between Jasiel and I came to an end sooner than later.

Hours later, Jordana had left my home and I'd left too. I now sat in front of my desk at GW Eleven, reading over the new menu that my head chef had created yesterday. As the seasons changed so did the food here at GW Eleven. I always wanted to keep our food menu fresh and updated so our customers had something new to look forward to when they visited. Sure, they could get their usual favorites but if they craved something new, they had options.

My main reason for coming into GW today was to oversee one of our very important deliveries. We had new crystalware being delivered all the way from France and as much as I trusted my team to get any job done without me, I still wanted to be present for the delivery.

Now that the crystalware had been successfully delivered, I could easily go home but knowing that Jordana wasn't going to be there made me reluctant to head home. She bought life into my home and honestly, I couldn't wait for us to take that deep step of living together. We already knew that we were in love and I couldn't lie, I was feeling like one lucky man ever since I'd heard her admit that she loved me. Those three words falling from her lips sounded divine and I knew from the way her eyes sparkled as she watched me that she meant them.

I loved her and because of how much I loved her, I knew that telling her the truth about my past with Kymani needed to happen before she headed back to work on Tuesday. I knew that I should've told her already but so many things had been happening between us and I hadn't been able to find the right moment yet. Luckily for me, Kymani hadn't spilled the beans to Jordana through a text or phone call, because Jordana hadn't confronted me about anything yet. I still had some time on my hands but the million-dollar question was how much time did I have?

I can't keep this a secret from her any longer. The number one thing I don't want between us is secrets. We're in love and we trust each other. She deserves to know the trut—

The sound of my phone ringing filled my office and my eyes drifted from the menu I was looking at on my iPad to my phone that sat face down on the right hand side of my desk. I reached for it and flipped it over to see a caller ID that made the corners of my lips quirk into a light smile.

"Unc."

"Nephew," he warmly greeted me. "You good?"

"Never been better."

“Never been better?” He chuckled. “Awww shit, you and wifey been getting busy, huh?”

I laughed. “Mind your business, old man.”

“You better slow down before you end up giving me grandkids before the end of the year, son.”

Once again I laughed and he too laughed.

“Are you home right now?” he asked moments later.

“Nah, I’m at GW. Why? What’s up?”

“I forgot my wallet last time I was at your crib,” he explained. “You see it?”

“No, I didn’t but it’s probably at the bar. You know your alcoholic ass loves a drink,” I teased. “I don’t plan to be home until way later but it’s cool, unc. You have your key, just use it. You didn’t need to call me; you know my home is just as much yours as it is mine.”

“I know but I didn’t wanna overstep, son. We’re getting closer but I always want you comfortable.”

“You’re not overstepping. Trust me,” I assured him. “Feel free to head there whenever. You’re welcome anytime.”

“Okay. Thank you, nephew… you sure you won’t be home anytime soon? I’m in the mood to day drink before my hot date with this baddie I met last week.”

“Nah, I’ve got hella shit to read over. I won’t home till later. Enjoy your date though.”

“Oh, I most definitely will. Lil’ mama ain’t ready for all the nasty little things I’m gon—”

“Alright, unc.” I cringed away from my phone that had been on my right ear. “Too much damn information.”

He laughed wildly. “See you later, Gene. Don’t work yourself too hard now.”

“Later, old man.”

After our call, I was back to reading over the restaurant’s new menus and just about to look over some new job applications my manager, Kross, had emailed me this morning when I suddenly got the urge to hear the voice of my baby.

“Someone missing me already, huh?”

“Maybe,” I said, shooting a huge grin her way.

She giggled and hearing her happiness made heat radiate through my chest.

I'd decided that a phone call wasn't enough. I needed to see her breathtaking face and God was I pleased that I was seeing it. She had her phone mounted on her dashboard phone holder, allowing me to see a clear view of her face. Her hair was up in a ponytail, emphasizing her flawless heart shaped face, not a single drop of makeup was on her golden beige skin and still she looked gorgeous as ever. Those brown eyes shined brighter the more she looked at me.

"Well, I miss you, Gene."

"Oh, you miss the man that you love?"

She smirked at my remark.

"The man that lights up your world every single day?"

"You're never going to let me live that down are you?"

"Nope," I said, placing extra emphasis on the p. "How can I when you're the woman who lights up my world too?"

"Awww… your cute, corny ass."

"I learned from the very best. She's the cutest, corniest woman I love."

She continued to giggle while keeping a focused gaze on the roads ahead.

"How far are you from your mom's?"

"Not too far. I'll be there in a few minutes."

"A'ight. Text me when you get there."

"I will, honey," she promised. "Have a good day at work."

"Thank you, beautiful. Have a good time with your mom. I love you."

"Thank you, handsome. I love you too," she said, making my heart swell.

I am never going to get tired of hearing her say that.

Once we'd ended our call, I was back to reading emails on my iPad until the sound of knocking on my door seconds later made me stop.

"Come in."

The door was pushed open and Kross stepped in.

"Boss," he greeted me with a respectful nod. "There's a woman downstairs, here to see you."

I gazed at him with more focus but remained silent.

"She says her name's Kymani and that you know her very well."

My chest suddenly felt tight and a heavy feeling formed in my stomach.

“She also said she’s not leaving here until she sees you.”

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jordana

"I HAD a dream last night that left me quite unsettled, baby."

I quickly sent Genesis a text, telling him that I was at my mom's house before locking my phone and placing it face down on the empty seat next to me.

My eyes lifted to meet bright amber eyes and I focused intently on the woman who had raised me to be the confident and courageous woman I was today.

"What was your dream about?"

"Well…" she sat upright on her beige armchair. "You were standing in a dark room with your brothers. Despite the room being dark, you knew exactly who was who and where they stood. Jasiel decided to run off and you were desperate for him to stay. The more he ran away, the more you chased after him and as you both ran, the room was getting bigger and bigger…"

My heart skipped several beats as she continued to talk.

"He was getting further and further away but you didn't stop chasing after him. You remained committed regardless of how far he was getting."

My mother then paused and gave me a serious look. "So, are you going to tell me what happened between you and Jasiel?"

I should've known that as soon as Jasiel and I had fallen out that my mother would realize without anyone needing to tell her.

Numa Evans was a very spiritual woman. She'd been raised Christian by her parents and still considered herself to be a believer of Christ 'til this day. It was when she turned twenty that she did some research of her own about her faith and that's when she found herself becoming a much more

spiritual person. And now at the age of fifty-two, Numa was the strongest, spiritually minded person that I knew.

When you heard her pray, all the tension present in your body would instantly leave, goosebumps would form along the back of your neck and you would feel truly alive. That's how powerful her words were. And her dreams always gave her answers to questions that she hadn't even asked yet. They had already formed in her mind and the answers would appear to her in her dreams. So, the fact that she was already aware of the conflict between Jasiel and I was not a surprise to me at all. She was our mother at the end of the day and she knew us better than we knew ourselves.

I began to pour my heart out to Numa and tell her everything that had happened in my life. From me meeting Genesis, falling in love with him, making great memories with him to how he'd accidentally met Jasiel, Jaiden, and Jaxson. And of course, I'd told her why Jasiel hated Genesis and didn't want me anywhere near him. By the time I was finished revealing all to her, tears were falling out of my eyes and Numa left her seat to take the empty seat next to me. Now she had an arm around me while I lay my head on her chest.

"Dana, sweetie, don't cry. You know Momma hates seeing you upset."

"But Momma everything's a mess right now," I cried. "Jasiel hates the man that I love. He doesn't want me with Genesis at all and is threatening to cut me off if I continue to be with him."

"Jasiel's saying a lot of things out of anger. Finding out that you're with Genesis must have been a huge shock for him. I'm not saying that what he did was right but he lashed out because it was the only thing that made sense for him to do in that very moment."

I sniffled and raised a hand to my face so I could wipe away my tears.

"But don't you worry, darling. Momma's gonna get this all sorted out."

"But Mom, Jasiel was certain about never accepting Genesis. I don't think he'll ever forgive Genesis for the sins of his father's chosen career."

"Well clearly he's forgotten what type of mother he has because I don't play about forgiveness."

She definitely didn't play about forgiveness.

"Trust me, Jordana. I'll get Jasiel to see sense. You know you can always count on me."

I knew I could count on my mother and for that reason alone I decided to stop worrying about the situation with Jasiel. He couldn't be angry

forever and eventually I would be able to re-introduce him to Genesis the correct way.

I spent another hour at my mom's home and by the time five-thirty p.m. came around, I decided to take my leave. On the drive home I thought about no one else but Genesis.

We shared such a great night last night and I was suddenly struck with the desire to spend another night in his arms. I knew he was working late today which was why I didn't bother texting him to let him know I was coming over. I wanted to surprise him especially since the last surprise I'd planned for him had been ruined.

I arrived home ten minutes later, packed an overnight bag, ate some left-over chicken parmesan in my refrigerator then left my apartment at six-thirty p.m.

The drive to Genesis's should've been a quick one but I got stuck in traffic, turning my fifteen-minute drive to a thirty minute one.

I stole a quick glance from my Apple Watch as I pulled into Genesis's driveway and saw that the time was 7:01 p.m. I bought my car to a stop outside Genesis's four car garage before pulling out my phone to access it. Once I'd entered the access code, the garage doors automatically lifted up, allowing me to drive my car inside.

When I'd parked my car in the spot next to his Bentley, I unlocked my phone once again to close the garage. I grabbed my overnight bag in the passenger seat next to me and left my Jeep.

Entering Genesis's home through his garage was key for me to keep my arrival at his home a secret until he returned home from work. If I entered through the front door, Genesis would be alerted through his Ring doorbell app of my presence outside his door and I really wasn't trying to have that crafty little app ruining my surprise.

Once I was inside Genesis's home, I kicked my Chanel slides off but rather than leaving them in the foyer like I always did, I decided to take them upstairs with me.

Since the last surprise I'd set up for Genesis had gotten ruined, I wanted to redo it because I'd been looking forward to pampering my man and treating him like the king that he truly was.

Before I got started on decorating his living room with rose petals and candles, I headed upstairs to take a quick shower and get dressed into an outfit that was for Genesis's eyes only.

While showering I thought about the conversation I'd had with my mother earlier today. She'd reassured me that she could sort out the situation between Jasiel, Genesis and I. I knew better than to doubt her. Numa Evans was a force to be reckoned with and if there was anyone who could stop Jasiel's stubborn ways, it was her. All I had to do was trust and believe that she'd mend things.

After my shower, I wrapped one of Genesis's Egyptian cotton towels around my wet body and left his bedroom. It took me fifteen minutes to moisturize my body with coconut oil and change into the lingerie set that I'd bought just for Gene.

A smile broke through my lips as I admired my reflection in the full length mirror I stood in front of. I wore a lace longline bra with a matching suspender, stockings, and thong. All in Genesis's favorite color of them all.

Red.

The more I stared at my curvaceous figure in the mirror, the more I found myself getting turned on by how sexy I looked. And I knew if I continued to oogle myself I was about to get the party started without my man.

I gave myself one last look before leaving Genesis's closet with his Versace robe in hand. Just as I got to the landing and placed his robe on, I heard a deep voice from downstairs that made me freeze.

"Oh yeah, his dumb ass definitely trusts me."

Genesis is home? Shit. I haven't started cooking yet or decora—

"I've got him right where I want him and now that I've earned his trust, I'll be able to get that confession from him in no time."

But the more the deep voice from downstairs spoke, I quickly realized that Genesis hadn't returned home yet.

"I told you as soon as he gave me a key to his crib, I had him right where I needed him. Now I have twenty-four seven access to his home and I'll soon be able to place those recorders all over… yup, that's right… I mean I've already recorded all the conversations we've had in my home so far but I want to know exactly what he's talking about when I'm not around… yeah and I'm pretty sure he's gonna tell that girlfriend of his some of his deepest, darkest secrets… I want to know them all including how he killed his sister's ex. Kylan never told me how Genesis did it and he died before I could ask him. But I'll find out soon enough and once I get that confession, Genesis is my bitch for as long as I want him to be."

Mathias released an evil laugh that made my blood run cold.

“Stupid boy actually thinks I fuck with him after what he’s done. He really thinks I fuck with him because I invite him over to my home, have deep conversations with him and let him drink with me… I told you how he gets when I get some cognac in him, he starts spilling all his truths and I’m positive that after a few more conversations, I’ll get that confession from him in no time. He’ll be singing like a canary and telling me everything I need to know about how he killed that boy and how he got rid of the body.

“I’ve been the nigga grinding and making sure my brother’s empire remains strong while he’s been out here living an easy life, running that dumb ass restaurant. He’s getting into the game whether he likes it or not… once I have that confession, he’ll be under my command and when I say jump, that mothafucka better jump high or I’m sending that recording to the feds. Maybe once he’s rotting in a jail cell that will teach him a lesson for abandoning his legacy.”

A weight seemed to press on my chest, robbing me of breath.

“Yeah I needed a chance to look around his home without him breathing down my neck. I know all the spots I’m gonna place the bugs in… yeah tell the guys to have them ready before the end of the week… yeah, I’ve checked downstairs… his bedroom? Shit, I forgot all about it. It’s a good thing you called me ‘cause my old ass definitely would’ve forgotten about it… That’s why you’re my right hand man, Corbin. I can always count on you, nigga.”

His footsteps started moving and when I heard him take the first stair, I quickly tiptoed toward Genesis’s bedroom.

No, that’s where he’s heading, Jordana! You can’t go in there!

“I don’t care how long this takes; I’m getting that idiot’s confession…”

I froze outside Genesis’s bedroom. My legs now shaking as Mathias climbed up the stairs.

He’s gonna see you and know you heard everything he said. He’ll kill yo

—

“Shit,” I heard Mathias curse and his footsteps suddenly stopped. “I think he’s back… yeah, I just heard his car pull up.”

His footsteps quickly descended down the stairs.

“I gotta go… yeah, I’ll call you back.”

I heard the front door open then close.

Silence filled Genesis's home but nothing about my thoughts were silent. My chest heaved in and out as I thought about everything I'd just heard Mathias reveal to whoever he was on the phone to.

He's been pretending with Gene the whole time… recording Gene… getting him intoxicated… he wants to blackmail him.

The more my thoughts circulated through my mind, the more my heartbeat like a drum in my chest. I wanted to run, to scream but my body had turned to stone.

The front door suddenly opened and when I heard Genesis say, "See you later, Unc. Enjoy your date," then shut the door seconds after, I rushed across the landing and sprinted down the stairs like it was the one thing I needed to do in order to survive. As I ran downstairs, I was suddenly hit with a horrifying thought.

You're in nothing but lingerie… and his uncle just left his crib... you have to admit, it looks kind of crazy… what if he thinks that you and Mathias are messing around?

Shit!

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genesis

WHAT HAD STARTED off as a serene day for me had quickly turned into a headache. I knew that all the delaying I'd been doing by not telling Jordana about my past with Kymani had to end tonight. There would be no more of that. As soon as I returned home, I would shower then change into comfortable clothes and make my way to Jordana's.

I had to be in comfortable clothes because of the uncomfortable conversation I needed to have with Jordana tonight. It was no longer something I could put off because Jordana needed to know the truth. I owed her that and I also owed her honesty about what Kymani had tried to do today.

Usually driving home from work was a peaceful thing for me to do but because of the bold woman who had decided to pay me a visit today, driving home was not a peaceful act at all. My serenity was in ruins and the only remedy to restore it would be to see Jordana.

Calling her would not be enough. I needed to stare into her eyes as she stared into mine, see her chest gently rise up and down as she breathed and hold her as I made it clear that my past with Kymani didn't mean shit. It would never mean shit and it couldn't hold a candle to my present and future with Jordana.

I just prayed that me revealing my past with Kymani and her visit to GW Eleven today didn't affect my relationship with Jordana. We'd already had the situation with Jasiel that we hadn't even rectified yet and now Kymani was being added to the mix. And I fucking hated that Kymani was about to be a topic of conversation between Jordana and I. But what could I do? She deserved to know the truth and I was going to give it to her.

A few minutes later, I pulled up to my driveway and as I brought the car to a stop next to a parked white Lamborghini Urus, my front door swung open.

My uncle stepped out my home with a wide smile spread across his face and I quickly returned it. He shut my door behind him and while he made his way over to me, I left the car.

“Found it,” he said, reaching into his back pocket and pulling out a black leather wallet that had a gold ‘YSL’ in the lower right hand corner.

“Good now you don’t have to call me to come pay your bill tonight,” I teased as I shut the door of my Rover and walked toward him.

He laughed and when we stood directly in front of each other, he extended his hand which I quickly accepted.

“Appreciate you letting me pick it up, nephew,” he said as we shared a hug with our hands locked in the middle while we patted each other’s backs.

“I told you you’re welcome here anytime. Mi casa su casa.”

After our hug, Mathias went to his car while I headed to my front door. I was feeling too lazy to park my car in the garage and since I had plans to see Jordana, it made sense to just leave it out front where I could easily hop back in it when I was ready to leave.

Just as I placed my key in the front door, I heard Mathias say,” Tell wifey I said hello. Hopefully, she’s missing me as much as I’m missing her.”

I looked over my shoulder and shot him a mean mug which caused him to cackle. Then I was back to focusing on entering my home.

“See you later, younin’,” I heard Mathias tell me once I’d stepped inside.

I turned around to see him standing by his open car door.

“See you later, Unc. Enjoy your date.” I waved him goodbye, watched him get in his Lambo then shut the door.

As soon as the door closed, I heard someone running across my landing upstairs which kicked my heart into overdrive and I quickly looked over at my stairs.

“Genesis!”

Hearing *her* voice made the corners of my lips lift but seeing her…

“God damn…” Heat flooded my core when she arrived at the bottom of the stairs. “Dana, baby… you look… you look…”

I couldn’t stop biting my lips as I admired the red lace on her golden beige skin.

“Genesis… I need to tell you something.”

“Oh, I don’t think you’re about to do much talking tonight, my love,” I lustfully remarked, stepping forward to get closer to her. “Unless you count all the moans you’re going to be making.”

“Genesis, it’s important…” She looked up at me with a hesitant look but didn’t move away as I closed the gap between us. “Baby, we need to talk… Gene….”

I grabbed her waist and pulled her toward me. My hands quickly found their way to her ass cheeks which I tightly squeezed.

“Uh-uh, I don’t wanna do no talking…” I pressed my lips to her neck and peppered her warm skin with kisses. “Not with you looking this mothafucking good.”

How the hell did she expect me to do any talking when she was looking so sexy right now?

She had on lingerie in my favorite fucking color and I was getting so damn hard that it hurt. Even though she had on my Versace robe, I could still see the lingerie currently lacing her perfect physique and I badly wanted to take off my robe so I could get a much better view of the lingerie. From what I could see so far, she had on a lace bra, matching thong, suspender belt and stockings. She was the lady in red that I needed in my bed.

Right now.

I needed to get her upstairs and remove my robe from her body before I lost all control and had my way with her on the stairs.

“Gene, I need to tell you about your uncle… he’s playing you.”

And I was dead set on having my way with Jordana until I heard her bring up my uncle. That’s when I knew that I needed to chill on acting so damn horny and listen to what my baby had to say.

I decided to keep my composure and allowed Jordana to lead me to the living room where she told me what she needed to say. It took her fifteen minutes to explain everything that she’d found out and how she’d found it out. Fifteen minutes that turned out to be the worst fifteen minutes of my entire life.

“Gene… say something… please,” she pleaded after she was done talking.

I'd been silent during the entire duration of her talking and now that she was finished, I was still silent as a grave. I'd also kept a stoic expression while she spoke because I was too stunned to show any emotion. I was too stunned to speak.

"Genesis…"

That little snake!

My own uncle had been plotting against me. My own flesh and blood was plotting on my downfall, all because he was livid about my choice to go down a legal, honorable life path. All the time I'd shared with Mathias, all the conversations we'd had and all the love I'd shown him had been a mistake.

One big mistake!

And I had no one to thank but the love of my life for being in my home at the very right moment. If she hadn't been such a thoughtful person, trying to surprise me tonight then she never would have overheard Mathias on the phone to Corbin and I would never know my uncle's true nature until he'd succeeded with his despicable plans.

"You don't even have to really say anything, Gene. You can scream, shout, or write something down… I just really need to know how you're feeling, honey."

She reached for my hand and I quickly accepted her hand, holding onto her tightly as I stared deeply into her eyes.

"I feel fine, Dana."

"Just fine?" She squinted at me.

I really feel like sending that snake to his grave sooner than later. But like my therapist never fails to tell me, violence is not the answer to solving my problems.

"I feel blessed that God gave me a woman as amazing as you to have my back no matter what."

Her eyes lit up at my statement.

"And for the record, I never once thought that you and my uncle were up to something," I admitted, remembering her words about being afraid of me thinking the worst after seeing her come downstairs in her lingerie when Mathias had just left my house. "I was just happy to see you, sweetheart."

My gaze dropped to her body and I admired the red lace she donned, unable to stop the bulge now growing in my pants again.

“You don’t need to worry about Mathias. He played himself thinking he could play me and he will be dealt with. The right way.”

“I don’t want you getting into trouble, Gene. Mathias isn’t worth it.”

“Oh, I won’t be getting into any trouble, my love.” I could see the fear crossing her face and I had a strong hunch she believed I was going to grant Mathias with the same sentence I’d granted Gabi’s vile ex three years ago.

Killing Mathias would be letting him off easy and I’d be a fool to do that. No. Mathias had to suffer and I already had a plan in place that would ensure he suffered for a very long time.

“I had a little insurance policy set up in case Mathias ever tried to double cross me like he has now.”

Jordana’s eyes bulged. “You did?”

I nodded. “Despite the fact that I let him into my life with open arms, I knew that Gabi didn’t trust Mathias and off of her reaction toward him, I always had a little bit of doubt in the back of my mind when it came to Mathias. I’ve had this insurance policy in place since the day he took over my father’s place. And even with us getting closer I never once had it removed.”

I began to explain the insurance policy I had in place when it came to Mathias Porter.

I knew where all the bodies were buried, where Mathias’s secret trap houses were and how him and my father had been able to stay under the feds’s radar all these years. I knew everything and I had a few informants in his organization that would be willing to sell Mathias out to the feds in a heartbeat if it meant that their families were taken care of for life.

What Mathias had failed to realize during his three years as king was that most of his soldiers didn’t fuck with him in the same way that they fucked with my father. They didn’t respect him as a person and they never would. Luckily for me, I could use their dislike toward Mathias to my advantage.

After explaining to Jordana how I would be able to make Mathias pay for what he was planning to do to me, I let go of her hand, reached for her waist, and lifted her onto my lap.

“Gene!” She laughed and wrapped an arm around my neck while I circled my arm around her waist.

“I need to tell you something too, Dana.”

“What is it?”

“It’s about Kymani…”

Her brows furrowed.

“And my past with her.”

I then explained my past with Kymani and her visit to GW Eleven this afternoon. When Kymani and I messed around I’d never let her visit any of my homes. We either fucked in her apartment or in a hotel room that I’d book for me to meet her at.

Coming down to GW Eleven was her only option because she had no idea where I lived which was exactly how I used to keep things with all my old flings. They didn’t need to know where I laid my head at night because I didn’t want them getting attached.

As I explained to Jordana what Kymani had done today, memories of her visit flew into my mental.

“What is it that you want Kymani?”

“You know exactly what I want, Genesis.”

She’d entered my office but she hadn’t taken a seat. Not that I’d offered her a seat in the first place but it was pretty much hers to take if she wanted it. She stood on the other side of my desk with her palms planted to my desk and her lustful eyes stuck on mine.

“I want you.”

She lowered her chest, forcing me to see the cleavage spilling from her tan, satin corset top that she wore underneath a black leather jacket.

“I’m not yours to want, Kymani. I’m with Jordana now.”

“And that’s my problem how?” She frowned. “She’s nothing compared to me. You know damn well that she can’t make you feel as good as I made you feel.”

I watched her with a disgusted look. Her and Jordana were supposed to be friends and here she stood, trying to get back into my bed when she knew fully well that Jordana was the only woman I wanted.

“You forget how good I make you feel, Genesis?” She slowly lifted her leather jacket off her frame and chucked it to the floor. “You forget how I can make you cum with these…” She cupped her breasts with each hand and squeezed them tight while sticking her tongue out at me. “Or would you like a reminder right now, right here?”

I didn’t respond. All I could do was watch her with more disgust that she was really in my office, trying to get me to fuck her. She’d really brought her

trifling ass to my place of business in the hopes that me and her could reconcile.

"That bitch!" Jordana yelled and when she tried to get off my lap, I held on tighter to her waist, stopping her from going anywhere. "Genesis, let me go!"

"Jordana, calm down."

"I'll be calm once I've beaten that bitch's ass!"

I had a feeling that Jordana knew exactly where Kymani lived and wouldn't hesitate to go straight to her house so she could beat her ass.

"She doesn't deserve a reaction out of you. You're too pretty and well paid to be fighting a rat like her."

Jordana slowly turned to face me and the hardness on her face began to ease up.

"You've already told me that you want to accept Aubrey's offer of becoming her manager and partner, right?"

Jordana nodded.

"So as the manager, do what you need to do to get rid of the rat."

She remained silent but I could tell from the concentrated look on her face that she was deep in thought about what I'd said.

Jordana had told me about the offer Aubrey had made her. I wasn't surprised that Aubrey wanted to make Jordana her manager. My baby was a hard worker and determined at any and everything she put her mind to. It only made sense for her to have a higher role at the salon and I was glad that Aubrey wanted to change the name of the salon to reflect Jordana's new status as manager.

"I got rid of Kymani by not only making it clear to her that I'm in love with you, but I also had my security detail make her leave the premises. She's also banned from GW Eleven permanently and all my staff knows to never let her in. I handled things without the use of violence and I encourage you to do the same, my love. Kymani doesn't deserve your energy. You're a boss and bosses do things professionally."

Jordana kept silent for a few minutes before she leaned in toward me and planted a sweet peck on my lips.

"Mmmh," I moaned as she dominated my mouth.

Our kiss only lasted for a few seconds and she pulled away, making me groan.

“Thank you, Gene,” she told me in a grateful tone. “Thank you for being you… thank you for loving me.”

“You don’t need to thank me for loving you, Dana. That’s something I’ll do every day without you ever having to ask me. You’re my everything.”

“You’re my everything too.” She smiled. “Thank you for always having my back.”

“You know I got you. Always.”

She nodded.

“Now…” My eyes drifted down to her lace covered body. “Are you going to let me get a better look at what you decided to wear for me tonight?”

“Uh-huh,” she whispered, pecking my lips one last time before getting up from my lap.

This time I released her and she stood up in front of me. Her hands went to my Versace robe which she slowly began to strip from her body.

I started rising to my feet but Jordana immediately shook her head ’no’ and stepped away from me.

“Sit back down, Mr. Washington. Unless you want me to make you sit back down.”

The bulge in my pants quickly expanded and I didn’t hesitate to sit back down.

“Good boy,” she praised me, causing the heat inside me to grow stronger. “Now sit back and enjoy the show… and just maybe when I’m finished, I’ll let you get a taste of me.”

I slipped my tongue out my mouth and wet my lips with it, unable to stop ogling her as she ran her hands up and down her curvy frame.

“Just a taste?” I asked.

“If you keep being a good boy for me then I’ll not only let you get a taste… you can cum in me anywhere you like.” She slipped two fingers into her mouth which made my eyes water. Her other hand she used to stroke the front of her panties and numerous shivers ran down my spine. Then she slowly turned around so I could get a much better look at her ass and the hand that she’d had on her front, she brought round to her ass and the second she started rubbing on her back passage through her thong, I felt pre-cum leak from my hard tip.

Fuck.

“Are you ready for the show?”

“Yes.”

“Yes who?”

“Yes, Jordana.”

“Uh-uh.” She shook her head at me. “It’s Miss Evans to you.”

“Yes, Miss Evans,” I corrected myself. “Whatever you want.”

The corners of her perfect lips tugged up in an inviting smile that refused to stop my arousal for her. And before I knew it, Jordana was giving me the best show ever that only made me want her one hundred times more than I already wanted her.

I swear this woman was made just for me. She was beautiful, intelligent, and so damn nasty. *My* kind of nasty. And I knew I could never get tired of being with her. She was all mine and knowing that brought me a happiness that not even money could buy. She was mine and I was hers too. Only hers.

“You have a good day today, Ms. *I’m A Five Time Number One Bestselling Poet* ?”

She laughed. “I sure did. How about you?”

“It was… eventful.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

The concern in her tone was unmissable. “You and Jordana tried to hash things out with her brother?”

“Nah, not yet. Still working on that,” I replied.

I’d told Gabi what had happened between me and Jasiel. She wasn’t happy about all the things that Jasiel had said to me and she definitely wasn’t happy that I was having problems with Jordana’s brother. In Gabi’s mind, Jordana and I were meant to be and she didn’t want a single soul coming in the middle of that. She offered to get involved but I told her not to worry. I didn’t want her focusing on my shit when she needed to stay focused on her success. Her new poetry anthology was a number one bestseller and still sitting pretty at number one.

I was so proud of her and even though I’d gifted her with a brand new Bentley truck a few weeks ago, I planned to surprise her and Kaiser with a brand new three-bedroom home. They’d been living in their current

townhome for quite a while now and they deserved an upgrade. I was more than willing to provide them with one.

“It’s been an eventful day because of what I found out our *amazing* uncle has been up to behind my back.”

“What has he been up to?”

I told Gabrielle everything that Jordana had found out today and her reaction was exactly how I’d knew it would be.

“See, Gene… I never told you this but you always knew that I never trusted him.”

“I know, Gab… you were right from the jump not to trust him.” I released a heavy sigh. “He could never be trusted.”

“I’m sorry.”

“Why are you apologizing, sis? You have nothing to be sorry for,” I said as I leaned against my kitchen counter and stared off into space.

I switched my phone to my left ear and crossed my right arm over my chest.

“I know,” she replied in a saddened tone that caused a pain to form in my heart. “I’m still sorry. I know how much you wanted a father figure and you thought you’d finally find one in Mathias. You’ve always had your guard up but you were starting to trust him.”

“Yeah.” I sighed once again. “I was… but everything happens for a reason. “And as much as I wanted a father figure, I already have such amazing figures in my life like Dane, Jordana and you, Gab. You are absolutely killing the poetry game right now and you inspire me more and more each day. I’m so proud of you, sis.”

“Awww… Gene. Thank you so much. I’m proud of you too and I know Mom would be proud of all the great things you’ve achieved.”

An ache formed in my chest at Gabi’s mention of our mom. I swear I missed that woman more and more each day.

“She’d be proud of you too, Gabi. Too damn proud.”

We then fell into a peaceful silence and I could tell Gabi was thinking about our mom. She missed her just as much as I did and honestly, I’d been surprised at Gabi’s mention of her. She never brought up our mother but the fact that she was bringing her up today told me all I needed to know about Gabi’s mental state.

She was healing more and more each day. Depression no longer had such a strong hold on her and I was truly thankful to God for protecting and

guiding my sister each day.

All the years of therapy, self-reflection and self-love had paid off for Gabi and she was becoming the best version of herself more and more each day. Initially she'd tried medication to ease her depression but the side effects only seemed to make her feel worse which is why she went full steam ahead with natural treatments. I was glad that the treatments had such a positive effect on her mental health and she was blossoming more and more each day.

Gab and I talked some more and it wasn't long till Jordana became the topic of our conversation.

"Who would have thought that you'd fall in love with my hairdresser?"

I chuckled.

"You really do love her, Gene."

"I really do."

"And I know you're beefing with her brother right now but it'll pass. He'll come around."

"I know he will and when he does, I'll make sure he understands just how much I care about her. I got her and everything that comes with her. All the good, bad, and crazy, I'll be taking. Anything she needs, consider it hers and with her in my life, I'll forever be whole."

"Awww look at you getting all mushy on my line." Gabi giggled. "I'm so happy Jordana has you, Gene. I'm so happy you have each other. You make an amazing couple and her brother would be foolish not to see that. You and her are meant to be."

There wasn't a single part of me that doubted Gabrielle's words. Jordana and I were meant to be. She'd been made for me and I'd been made for her. She'd been the missing piece that I'd been longing for and like I'd told Gabi, I'd forever be whole with Jordana in my life.

Nothing and no one was going to come between our love.

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jordana

"HIS PHONE WENT STRAIGHT to voicemail, Momma. I can't get through to him."

My heart sank and I slumped against the upholstered chair I currently sat on. My eyes drifted away from Jaxson who had just told us what felt like the worst news ever.

Sunday had finally arrived and like always, this was the day me, my brothers and my mother would all share Sunday supper together. There was just one major issue right now.

Jasiel wasn't here.

My eyes traveled to the empty seat opposite mine and my heart sank further.

Jasiel was always the first one seated out of me and my brothers so to not see him here now? I couldn't lie it felt heartbreaking especially because I knew exactly why he wasn't here right now.

"I can't believe him right now," my mother voiced, a frown creasing her forehead. "We just had a conversation yesterday and now he's acting like he's forgotten who his family is?"

My mother got up from her seat and walked out the dining room. She arrived back seconds later with her phone to her ear and a tightness in her eyes. She took her seat at the head of the table and waited patiently for her call to be picked up. I knew the line had gone to voicemail by the frustrated breath she released.

"Jasiel Sidney Evans, I know damn well you'd didn't just send me, *your mother* , the woman who carried you in her stomach for nine months and almost died giving birth to you, to voicemail. I know damn well you're not

flaking on the one day that we all share as a family. You have thirty minutes to get your ass down here and if you're still not here after thirty minutes I guess you clearly don't value your life. Don't hurt yourself trying to play with me, boy. I'm not one of your little friends. Get your ass down here right now, Jasiel, or I promise you ain't nothing gon' be nice when I come down to your spot and get you myself."

And after speaking her mind, Numa hung up and placed her phone down to the table.

Me, Jaxson, and Jaiden remained silent while watching her intently.

"Let's say grace and then eat, my loves," she calmly instructed.

We joined hands and bowed our heads as our mother led grace. Once grace was done, we dug into the feast that I'd helped my mother prepare for Sunday supper today.

Our meal was quiet which was quite strange because our family meals were never quiet. We always had something to talk about but today no one said a word. Jasiel's absence had clearly affected all of us.

Jaiden and Jaxson had promised me that they would talk to Jasiel on my behalf and they tried to yesterday but he'd dodged their calls and texts all day. Even our group chat had gone dead. Jasiel refused to talk to any of us.

I'd always known my brother was a stubborn mule but God damn, I didn't know he could be this stubborn. He wasn't trying to listen or talk to me or my brothers. The only person who had managed to speak to him yesterday had been my mother but of course she was now experiencing the same treatment that Jasiel had given my brothers.

As I ate, my mind swirled with panic about the future of my relationship with Jasiel.

What if he refuses to ever talk to me again? I can't make him do anything that he doesn't want to do. I can't force him to accept my relationship with Genesis.

I hated everything about what was happening to the tight bond I shared with Jasiel and most of all I hated the effect it was having on my family. I was terrified for my future relationship with Jasiel. Absolutely terrified.

But twenty-five minutes later, my terrors flew out the window when a key was heard opening my mother's front door and footsteps entered her home.

"Look who finally decided to grace us with his presence," my mother announced when Jasiel stepped into the dining room.

Our eyes locked and I felt a lightness in my chest until his eyes suddenly went cold as he watched me.

He's here but nothing's changed. He still feels the same way.

"Fix your God damn face, Jasiel before I fix it for you."

My mother's threat made him stop glaring at me and he looked over at her instead.

"I'm here, Mom, but I don't intend to change how I feel about Jordana's new relationship."

"Oh really?" My mother asked, sarcasm laced in her tone. "Enlighten me on why that is, Jasiel."

He pinched his lips together and remained quiet for a few seconds then said, "She's decided to be involved with a crimi—"

"And you have proof of Genesis being a criminal?"

"No, bu—"

"So why on earth have you taken it upon yourself to judge him as being this horrible lawbreaker when you don't even know him, Jasiel?"

Jasiel kept silent but his tension filled expression remained.

"When did I ever raise you to be such a judgmental person? When did I ever raise you to break your sister's heart like this? You may be a DEA agent who puts away lawbreakers but you are still my son and Jordana's brother. You should still be mature enough to put any bias you have to the side and be there for your sister. I know what you think about Genesis but you haven't once given him a chance. You've judged him without knowing him and you've pushed your sister to the side like she's not important to you."

"She is important to me," Jasiel fired back but my mother mean mugging him made him quickly soften his tone. "I just… I just don't want to see her end up with the wrong man. I don't want to see her getting hurt."

"But Genesis the right man for me, Jas," I intervened. "He's the perfect man for me and if you just took the time to get to know him, you'll understand why he is. You'll realize that all your preconceived notions about him are wrong."

I then went on to explain just how great Genesis had been to me. How great we'd been to and for each other.

I told Jasiel all about the ways in which Genesis had been motivating and uplifting me. All the ways in which Genesis encouraged me to be a better woman, attend therapy and work on healing the traumas of my past. I

also revealed what I'd found out yesterday about Mathias and all his snakish ways.

"Wait, what?" Jasiel queried in a voice of disbelief. "His own uncle is trying to blackmail him because he refuses to take over his father's business?"

I nodded and let out a deep sigh. "Yes. He never accepted Genesis's choice to be in a legal, honest profession. And now he wants to force Genesis to be in the drug game."

"That's foul," Jaiden chimed in.

"But how exactly does he intend to blackmail Genesis? That would mean he's trying to get some kind of dirt on him?" Jasiel asked and I simply shrugged.

I hadn't revealed what Genesis had done to his sister's ex because firstly it wasn't my place to say and secondly, I really wasn't about to give Jasiel another reason to hate Genesis. He already despised all things criminal and if I revealed that Genesis had murdered someone, it would only be adding more fuel to the fire that Jasiel had in his heart for the love of my life.

I just prayed that by me telling Jasiel what Mathias had planned for Genesis it would lessen the fire he had in his heart for Genesis. I was praying that he believed me when I said that Genesis had nothing to do with his father's illicit organization. And my prayers seemed to be answered when Jasiel stepped deeper into the dining room and took his usual seat at the table. The seat that was opposite mine.

He remained silent for a few seconds while holding me hostage with an intense look.

"Peanut… I want to sit down with Genesis," Jasiel announced and I quickly jumped out of my seat to rush around the table to him.

"This doesn't mean I love the nigga all of a sudden, Jordana. I'ma still fuck him up if he fucks up."

"Language, Jas," my mother firmly said.

"Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!" I wrapped my arms around Jasiel and squeezed him tight.

He lifted his arms to hug me and my heart leaped with joy.

"I can admit I was outta line with a lot of things I said and I do need to apologize to him. But just because I'm apologizing that doesn't mean I'm about to go easy on the man because I'm not, J. I still intend to make sure he's the right man for you."

“And that’s fine,” I replied happily. “Just as long as you don’t try to fuck him up again.”

“Jordana!”

“Sorry, Momma.”

“Cause we all know your weak ass is gonna lose,” Jaiden voiced, laughing loudly.

I pulled away from Jasiel to look over at Jaiden who sat next to him.

“No, I ain’t,” Jasiel insisted.

“Did you forget he almost put your ass to sleep and I had to intervene?” Jaiden reminded Jasiel in an amused tone. “Your weak ass couldn’t do shit to him!”

“You liar! Yes I ca—”

“I swear one of these days I’ma have to wash all your mouths out with soap,” my mother commented.

I giggled, knowing fully well that Jaiden was right about Jasiel not being able to hurt Genesis. When it came to fighting, my man could easily take all their asses on. Any day, any time.

I gave Jasiel one last hug and a kiss on his cheek before I took my seat.

“So, when are we gonna have this sit down with Genesis?” Jaiden asked.

“We?” Jasiel’s brows shot up in the air.

“Yeah *we* ,” Jaxson finally spoke. “You’re not the only one making sure he’s the right fit for Peanut. We all gotta be there.”

“Exactly so when are we doing this, Peanut?” Jaiden eyed me closely.

“Well not anytime soon,” I admitted. “Genesis has a few things to take care of but as soon as he’s free, you three will be at the top of his list.”

My brothers nodded and I couldn’t help the smile that formed on my lips.

I was glad to see my brothers being so understanding about Genesis’s time being limited right now and I was especially glad to see the change of heart that Jasiel now had. Clearly my mom’s words and mine had finally gotten through to him. He was going to make a better effort with Genesis and that’s really all I wanted. That’s all Genesis wanted too. And I knew he’d be happy to hear that Jasiel wanted to apologize for all the unwarranted things he’d hurled at Genesis.

I couldn’t wait for my brothers and Genesis to sit down. But for now, Genesis had someone that he needed to handle and so did I.

———

Monday morning had arrived and although this was my day off from the salon so I could do house calls, I'd purposely left this day free of me doing any appointments because this Monday was an important one. A *very* important one.

I pushed open the glass door in front of me and stepped into the brightly lit space with a huge smile on my face.

"Good afternoon, Summer."

"Good afternoon, future boss lady."

I giggled and smiled at Summer before walking away from where she sat at the reception desk.

"Good afternoon, pretty ladies," I greeted the girls.

Aja, Taylor, and Leilani all graced me with a cheerful, lively response and each of them complimented my outfit.

I'd come dressed in a French blue suit that had been tailored to perfection on my physique by the amazing Judah, Genesis's personal tailor. On my feet I had on white Jimmy Choo pumps and I carried a white lambskin medium Chanel classic flap bag, just another one of the many bags Genesis refused to stop spoiling me with. I also had on a Van Clef and Arpels necklace, bracelet and earrings, all courtesy of my man who loved to seeing me rocking nothing but the best. The funny thing was, I could easily buy my own expensive designer bags and jewelry which I'd done a few times in the past but Genesis didn't want me paying for a damn thing. Anything I wanted in this life, he would get me – his exact words, not mine. He also said what's the point of me spending my money when I had his? I swear that man never ceased to amaze me.

"Good afternoon, Kymani," I greeted the snake that hadn't greeted me yet.

She hadn't even turned around to acknowledge me. Granted, she had a client she was doing the braids of but having a client never stopped Kymani from having a conversation with anyone. She knew exactly why she hadn't greeted me today.

Even though she refused to grant me with a response, I wasn't done with her yet.

I'm just getting started actually.

“I need to speak to you in private once you’re finished with your client, Kymani.”

I didn’t expect her to respond right away but she did, shocking the hell out of me.

“We have nothing to discuss,” she sassed and I rapidly blinked, thinking I’d misheard her.

“Excuse me?”

“We have nothing to discuss,” she repeated, finishing the last braid of her client then turning to face me. She treated me with a look of pure hatred. “You’re a fake ass bitch who doesn’t deserve to be Aubrey’s new partner. You were the one that constantly told me how you believed Aubrey was just jealous of how much success we’ve brought to her salon. How she’ll never have half of the talent that we have and how she’s nothing without us. You were the one that was trying to persuade me to leave Aubrey’s salon with you so we could get our own spot together. How do you think Aubrey will feel about her new partner being a fake, lying ass bitch?”

What. The. Hell?

Was Kymani really acting like I’d said those words when she’d been the one who had been convinced that Aubrey was jealous of us all? Was she really acting like she hadn’t tried to convince me to become her business partner?

“Kymani, why are you lying right now?” I shot a glare her way. “You were the one convinced Aubrey was jealous of us and the same person trying to get me to leave with you. You know damn well what you said to me numerous times. I can’t believe the lies coming out of your mouth right now.”

“Shut up, hoe. The only one lying here is you.”

I stepped forward but a hand suddenly grabbed my arm, stopping me from going any further.

“J, don’t, babe,” I heard Aja softly say from behind me.

“The next time you call me out of my name, I promise you I’m beating your ass,” I warned Kymani.

Kymani let out a loud laugh. “Beat my ass? Bitch, you can’t do sh—”

“Jordana, no!”

“Jordana don’t even bother. She’s not worth it,” Aubrey’s gentle voice sounded through the salon.

I’d just managed to break free from Aja’s hold and was about to rush toward Kymani until Aubrey’s voice stopped me in my tracks.

Kymani turned to look at Aubrey with a surprised look.

“I thought we would be able to do this without creating a scene but clearly you have no decorum so we now have to do this in front of your very last client of the day and in this salon,” Aubrey said, stepping deeper into the salon and standing a short distance away from Kymani’s workstation. “I know all about the things you were saying behind my back Kymani, the text messages you sent to Jordana about me being jealous of you and the girls, how I was nothing without you all and how could I forget about you wishing I’d just drop dead.”

Kymani’s eyes went round and she went white.

Yeah, I’d already told Aubrey everything about what Kymani had said about her. I had a strong hunch that Kymani wouldn’t leave the salon without putting up a fight which is why I made sure that Aubrey not only knew about Kymani trying to rekindle things with my boyfriend, but I also made sure she knew about all the shit Kymani had been saying behind her back. I even owned up to the few things I said about Aubrey being a bitch but my dirt was nothing in comparison to all the shit talking Kymani had done.

“You not only talked shit about me, but you also had the audacity to go behind Jordana’s back to go see Genesis in the hopes of restarting your meaningless situationship with him.”

“A-Aubrey, she’s lying!” Kymani yelled. “I never said those things, she did! And Genesis has always wanted me! Their relationship is fake!”

“My relationship is fake and yet you were in here gassing me up about it when he came to surprise us with food? You pretended like you didn’t even know him. And then you went to go see him and told him I was nothing compared to you?” I let out a cold chuckle. “You really are pathetic.”

“You’re the pathetic one!” Kymani fumed. “And you are nothing compared to me. You’re a fat, ugl—”

“I know damn well you ain’t about to call Jordana fat and ugly,” Taylor chimed in which made Kymani shut right up. “That’s a lie and you know it. You sound dumb as hell, Kymani.”

“You really need to shut up,” Aja added. “Or I’ll gladly slap you myself.”

“You’re nothing but a snake and I’m glad we’ve seen your true colors today,” Leilani voiced.

I was grateful to have the girls riding for me. I didn’t even have to say a word because they had my back.

“You are fired from this salon and I hope you know that you are never welcome here ever again.”

“Y-You can’t do this!” Kymani shrieked, tears now welling up in her eyes.

“It’s already done, hoe,” I told her smugly. “Next time think twice before trying to take what doesn’t belong to you.”

“Summer,” Aubrey called out to her assistant.

“Yes, ma’am?”

“Please see to it that Kymani takes all her belongings and gets off the premises as soon as possible.”

“Yes, ma’am!”

It took twenty minutes for Kymani to pack her stuff and leave Aubrey’s salon. The whole time she cried like a baby and tried to beg Aubrey to let her stay. She even continued to hurl insults my way and remained adamant that I was the liar. No one was listening to her though because no one cared. Not even her current client cared.

And by the time Kymani was gone, relief came through me and I was glad that the wolf in sheep’s clothing was out of my life for good.

Never in a million years did I think Kymani could be such a snake but I was glad that the truth had been unveiled and we were all free of her. I was also glad that Genesis had remained loyal to me. He could have chosen to fall for Kymani’s charm and rekindle their situationship but he chose not to. He loved me and I loved him. And I couldn’t wait to spend the rest of my life with him.

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genesis

"AS ALWAYS I'M proud of all of you. You continue to be the best team I could've ever asked for and I know no matter what I can always count on you all."

They all thanked me and sent appreciative smiles my way. My monthly meeting with my inner circle was always a treat for me to have because as per usual my team stayed on top of their game.

It was always great for me to be able to reflect on their great efforts and praise them for their hard work. GW Eleven was doing better than ever and my company was making so much damn money that we were officially running out of ways to spend it.

Once our meeting was over, the five of them left my office. Leaving me to be alone with my thoughts. Well, I wasn't alone with my thoughts for long because my phone suddenly rang and I swiped it from the right hand side of my desk.

There was no caller ID but I didn't need a caller ID for who was calling me right now. I knew exactly who was trying to reach me right now and it was a call I'd been patiently waiting for.

I picked up on the third ring and placed my phone to my right ear but didn't say a word.

"Hello? Genesis? Youngin' is that you?"

Weak.

That's exactly how he sounded and that's exactly what he was. A weak, pathetic, old man.

Five days was all it'd taken for my insurance policy to kick in and grab Mathias by its claws. Five days and Mathias was in the one place he

thought he'd never be in.

"Gene, I need your help."

I continued to remain silent as my uncle poured his heart out to me.

"I don't know how but they got me… these mothafuckas got me!" he cried. "My attorney is saying they're trying to pin a RICO charge on me, man… I could do twenty in the pen or even life! You gotta help me, son. You gotta get me out of here and find out who the fuck would be bold enough to do this to me!"

I let out a loud laugh that immediately silenced my uncle. Once I released my first laugh I couldn't stop laughing because honestly this shit was comical to me.

"What the fuck is so funny, Genesis?" Mathias gruffly asked.

"You," I said with one last laugh. "You're the funniest man I know."

"Ain't nothing funny about the situation I'm in! I'm stuck in jail and you're over here laughing. Have you lost your damn mind?"

"No, I haven't but clearly you have for thinking you can talk to me in that tone," I lightly warned him. "The only reason why you're able to have this little phone call with me in the first place is because of me, Unc. How do you think that little burner slipped into your cell this morning?"

"You got this phone to me?" His happiness was unmissable. "See I knew I could count on you, son. Thank yo—"

"Firstly, I ain't your son, so stop with all that bullshit," I cut him off. "Secondly, this wasn't me trying to help you. I don't ever intend to do that. I'm only allowing you to have this one last call with me so you can truly understand how you are the architect of your own downfall."

"What are you talking about, Genesis?"

"The night you came to my house, trying to find hiding spots for your little recorders? Jordana was upstairs and heard everything you said on the phone to Corbin."

He went silent.

"You really thought you'd be able to blackmail me or put me in jail, old man?"

He continued to stay silent.

"You really thought I wouldn't find out what you were up to?" My body tensed. "You really thought you could play me!"

"G-Genesis, I-I… I'm so—"

“Save your whack ass apology,” I snapped. “Nothing you say will change what’s coming your way.”

“But I’m your uncle, Genesis. We’re flesh and blood. How… How could you do this to me?”

“The same way you were trying to get one up on me by getting me to confess to doing something that you know I did to protect my sister. My *true* flesh and blood.”

“Genesis... please… don’t do th—”

“I want you to remember this day. Remember that the great KP’s son put you right where you belong. You’ll be rotting in a jail cell for the rest of your life, Unc, and I hope now that you realize I wasn’t playing about never taking over from you or my father. I would never give you the chance to rob me away from the people I love. Enjoy your time in your new permanent home. Don’t drop the soap, old man.”

Clearly my words were enough to make his annoyance flare because of the words he yelled down the line next.

“You dumb mothafucka! You son of a bi—”

I quickly ended the call. No longer caring about what he had to say to me.

Mathias Porter was officially dead to me.

“Miss you, Jordy!”

“I miss you more, handsome.”

“Oh, and I’m guessing you don’t miss me? I see Jordana’s the one that’s getting all your love today.”

“Miss you too, Uncle Genie!”

I smiled at the adorable three-year-old looking at me on the bright screen that his mother helped him hold up in front of him.

“Make sure your momma takes loads of videos of you showing off those swimming skills that I taught you.”

Kaiser nodded and smiled.

“Speaking of swimming,” Gabi spoke and my eyes focused deeper on my sister. “Kai and I have a date with the pool now. Ain’t that right, munchkin?”

“Yesssss!” Kaiser squealed with excitement, raising his hands in the air, and making me and Jordana laugh.

Gabi’s sun kissed skin was glowing, her coffee brown eyes seemed to be smiling and there was just something about her aura that was truly enthralling. She looked happy and I could genuinely feel her happiness through my screen. And I was over the moon for her. Her and Kaiser had decided to take a trip to Turkey and it was a vacation that they both deserved.

I’d managed to surprise them with the new home I’d bought for them a few days ago and luckily for me they’d both loved it. They couldn’t wait to move out of their current townhome into their new home and I was looking forward to helping them furnish their new abode.

“You two love birds enjoy the rest of your evening.”

“Thank you, Gabi,” Jordana told her. “You and Kai enjoy your time at the pool and the rest of your vacation.”

“Yeah y’all enjoy the rest of vacation.”

Gabi thanked Jordana and I and once her and Kai had said their final goodbyes, Jordana ended the FaceTime call before placing my phone in the empty space next to her. Then she snuggled up closer to me.

We were in the living room, sitting on one sofa and I had my arm around her while she rested her head on my chest and placed her arm against my lower abdomen.

“Have I told you that I love you today?”

She lifted her head and her angelic eyes glittered as they locked with mine.

“You have, baby,” she confirmed.

“Well, that don’t matter to me. I’ll say it a million times a day if I have to…” I lowered my head to press a quick peck to her lips. “I love you.”

“I love you,” she repeated after me with a wide smile on her lips.

“I wish you could’ve met my mother.”

Her eyes immediately misted with tears.

“She would’ve loved you, maybe even more than she loved me.” I chuckled. “She would’ve love you so much, Dana… she….”

My eyes started burning and that familiar ache I got in my heart at the mention of my mother hit me.

“It’s okay, Gene,” Jordana whispered, tears now streaming down her cheeks. “Let it out.”

And that’s exactly what I did.

I let the tears out and once they started falling, they didn’t stop.

I missed my mother, Giselle, more than anything in the world. She’d meant everything to me and I’d cared about her more than I cared about my damn self. I wished she hadn’t taken her own life but at the same time I knew that wishing she was still here with me and Gabi was selfish. She didn’t want to be here anymore and I could never blame her for what she’d done. She’d done what was best for herself and I knew she was at peace.

While I cried, Jordana kissed my tears away, whispered endlessly to me about how much she loved me, how proud my mother would be of me and I swear I was falling in love all over again with this queen. *My queen.* I would do anything for her. That was something I was certain of. There would never be anything too difficult for me to do for Jordana. I would do anything for her easily. I would happily spend the rest of my days on this earth kissing the ground that she walked on.

After I was done crying, Jordana gave my cheeks one last kiss before leaning back and watched me carefully.

“Feel better?”

I nodded, grateful to have a woman who allowed me to show weakness and gave me the strength I needed to be whole.

“You’re everything, Jordana. My everything,” I told her. “Thank you for being you. Thank you for choosing me. I’ve dreamed about being with you… having you in my arms and now here we are.”

“Thank you for loving me, Genesis. Loving every part of me and having my back. You speak life into me and I know God sent you into my life to help me be a better woman. The air I breathe is ten times better because of your presence in my life. You are a gift to this world and a gift to my life. I can’t wait to spend the rest of my life with you, Mr. Washington.”

My heart melted and a smile curled my lips.

“Come here,” I ordered. “I need to feel those pretty lips on me. Right. Now.”

“Oh, you do, huh?” A seductive gleam bloomed in her eyes.

“Yes,” I confirmed. “And after all the sweet things you just said I not only need to feel your lips on mine…”

She giggled and leaned in closer to me.

“I need to feel you riding me while you tell me how much of a good boy I am,” I said in a low tone that caused her eyes to glow hot with lust.

“I think I can make that happen,” she replied before crashing her soft lips to mine.

This woman right here… she was my soulmate. She’d been made for me, sent to me by God Himself and we were going to spend the rest of our lives together and I was excited to experience life with Jordana.

No matter what I got her and she’s got me too. Always and forever.

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jordana

I LIFTED the long-stemmed glass in front of me to my lips while keeping my eyes sealed on the lady looking down at her bright phone screen with puppy dog eyes.

"But your daughter misses you, Daney. Don't you miss her?"

"Of course, I miss her and I miss her mommy, too."

Charlie smiled and let out an elated sigh.

"So come back home to us, Pumpkin. We need Daddy back home where he belongs."

"I'll be back before you know it, honey pie. Daddy's gotta handle business to keep the lights on, remember?"

Charlie playfully rolled her eyes before nodding in agreement.

"Give Bubbles a big kiss for me and tell her I'll be home soon. A'ight?"

My eyes drifted to the right hand side of the room to Charlie's floor to ceiling window where a baby pink, plush dog bed was situated. Laying on top of the bed was no one other than Charlie and Dane's daughter. Her eyes were closed as she peacefully slept.

"Okay, I will as soon as she's up from her nap," Charlie promised.

"And as soon as I'm back, mommy's gonna get a kiss right in the middle of her sexy ass thigh—"

"Pumpkin…" Charlie's cheeks flushed warm red. "I'm not alone. Jordana's here."

"Oh shit, my bad. What's up, Jordana?"

Charlie held her phone up in my direction and I dropped my cocktail glass to the marble counter below me. Then I smiled and waved a hand at

the three rear cameras on Charlie's iPhone. Charlie then tapped her screen and brought her phone back down in front of her.

"Let me leave y'all to it. I just wanted to see your pretty face before I head into this boring ass meeting."

"Awww, Daney," Charlie cooed, staring at his face with a loving look plastered on her face. "You are so sweet… hurry home so you can see and kiss this face in person."

"I will, Honey Pie. See you soon."

"See you soon, Pumpkin." She blew him a kiss and smiled before their FaceTime call ended.

Charlie sighed and lowered her phone. Her twinkling eyes quickly met mine.

"What?" she asked me with a faint smile lining her lips

"I miss you, Pumpkin. Your daughter misses you," I said in a high-pitched tone of voice which immediately made her giggle.

"I don't sound like that!"

"Yes you do, heifer!" I laughed.

"Do not!" she insisted between her giggles.

She then left her place on the other side of her kitchen island to come join me. Once she was seated on the bar stool next to mine, we lifted our cocktail glasses, and clinked them before taking a sip of the cosmopolitan Charlie had prepared for us earlier.

"I'm so happy you and Dane decided to tell each other how you feel, CC."

"So am I," she admitted. "It feels like a breath of fresh air now that our feelings are out in the open and we've decided to explore our relationship."

"Oh, I bet you're both doing a lot of exploring, missy. A whole lot of exploringgggg." I stuck my tongue out at her and flicked it up and down.

"Jordana!" She giggled. "Look who's talking, *Miss I Can't Keep My Hands Off My Nigga. "*

I too giggled, knowing that she told no lies. I most definitely couldn't keep my hands off Genesis and I never wanted to. Charlie and I continued to talk and catch each other up on our lives. I really was glad that her and Dane had decided to stop fooling around and told each other how they really felt. It had worked greatly in their favor and I really couldn't wait to watch their relationship strengthen more and more.

“Are you excited to be Aubrey’s new manager?” Charlie asked me moments later after we’d taken a few more sips of our cocktails.

“I really am,” I replied. “I think this is going to be the start of a great partnership.”

“It will be. You’re a boss at what you do, J. It was only right that she chose you as her manager.”

“Thank you, CC. And you’re a boss at what you do too. You’re absolutely killing it on IG and I can’t believe you’re about to reach two million followers… well I can believe it but it feels like it was just yesterday that you reached one million followers.”

“I know right! Sometimes I think I’m dreaming and someone’s gonna wake me up from this amazing dream.”

“Well, this ain’t no dream, cuzo. This is your life. Your well-deserved life. People love you, as they should. You’re a great, phenomenal woman and I’m blessed to have you as my cousin.”

“Awwww, Jordana. Not you getting all sappy on me. I’m so blessed to have you as my cousin too. I love you.”

“I love you,” I said, moving closer to her at the same time that she moved closer to me.

We embraced and rocked each other side to side.

“Please get pregnant before me so I can be a rich auntie before you,” she whispered and I cackled.

“Charlotte!” I called her by her actual name. “I’m tryna be the rich auntie first!”

We laughed as we continued to hug and happiness surged through me during the moment I now shared with my cousin.

Life was only getting better and better for us both and I couldn’t wait to see how our futures turned out. I knew that we were going to be living very happy lives with our significant others. We were going to be happy future wives, happy rich aunties, and happy cousins. Knowing that was enough to make the smile on my face intensify.

We were going to live our best lives together and I was looking forward to every second of it.

“Jordana, sweetie… stop stressing. They’re fine.”

My heart fluttered wildly the more I watched the scene playing out in front of me.

My three brothers stood in my mother’s back yard. Three burly men surrounding the man that owned my heart. They each had their arms crossed as they stared him down with emotionless expressions.

Genesis had his back facing me so I couldn’t see his facial expression but his arms were hanging by his sides and his head remained lifted high, telling me he wasn’t intimidated by my three brothers aka my three fathers.

Genesis was the one doing most of the talking which I wasn’t the greatest fan of because I just knew my brothers were interrogating him relentlessly.

“Why don’t you sit down and have something to drink, Sweetie?”

“I can’t, Momma,” I told her without turning to face her. “I gotta see this.”

“I’m sure Genesis has got this under control.”

“I’m sure he does but that doesn’t mean I can’t watch them… I don’t even get why they all have to stand? They should be the ones sitting down.”

When Jasiel had agreed to have a sit down with Genesis I thought it’d be the four men actually sitting down. But no, they just had to stand around and make me nervous.

“And why are they taking so lon...” My words trailed off when I saw Jasiel lift his hand out toward Genesis.

They shook hands and my heart leaped. Then Jaxson and Jaiden extended their hands out for Genesis to shake and my spirit soared. Then the four of them started walking toward the house and I didn’t have it in me to pretend like I hadn’t been watching them.

I saw Jaiden’s lips move as they sauntered over to me but I didn’t catch what he said. They all began to laugh as they locked eyes on me and I just knew Jaiden was talking shit about me.

“Don’t do my baby like that,” I heard Genesis say when they were a shorter distance away from me.

“You know she’s got a peanut shaped head, man. Just because you love her that don’t mean it ain’t true.” Jaiden voiced and I lifted my middle finger at him.

He gasped and his eyes bulged.

“Momma! Jordana’s doing bad things with her middle finger!”

I quickly acted like I hadn't just flipped him the bird and turned to my mother with an innocent smile.

"What bad things, Jai?" My momma asked him curiously. "Sounds like you're just seeing things." She shot me a wink and I smirked, knowing fully well she'd seen me give Jaiden the middle finger.

"Hey, no fair!" Jaiden protested. "You saw what she did, Momma."

I laughed before walking over to my man who had stepped into the house after my brothers.

"You okay, Gene? They didn't go too hard on you did they?" I asked him once I stood in front of him.

He wrapped an arm around my waist and pulled me in the close.

"Cause you know I'll beat them up if they did."

"You can't do shi… anything to us," Jaiden quickly corrected himself before our mother could scold him for cursing.

"They were cool," Genesis said with a grin. "We're cool. Ain't that right fellas?"

"Yup," Jaxson confirmed.

"We good," Jaiden answered.

"Yeah we straight," Jasiel replied. "He's all good in my book."

"Hallelujah!" my mother exclaimed. "Now can you three please help me set the table so we can eat?"

My brothers each began to grab plates, cutlery, and cups from the kitchen before heading to the dining room. Minutes later, the six of us were sitting around the dining table and feasting on Momma's delicious cooking. She'd prepared a real feast for us tonight. A Cajun crawfish boil with all our favorites – sweetcorn, potatoes, mushroom, and smoked sausage. And as always, the food was bomb and I loved everything about the rich flavors pleasing my taste buds.

"You must really love my daughter, huh, Genesis?" my mother asked moments into our feast. "You over here getting your hands nice and dirty to enjoy that crawfish."

"Yes ma'am." He nodded after sucking seasoning off his fingers and of course my freaky ass got flashbacks of him sucking my juices off his fingers during our intimate moments together. "I ain't afraid to get a lil' messy to enjoy a good ass meal."

"I love that," my mother commented with a smile. "Cause in this house we love eating good ass meals that can get messy. Ain't that right, boys?"

My brothers all hummed in unison, too engrossed in devouring their meals to say actual words.

“I’m glad to have you in our family, Genesis. Just promise me you won’t ever break my baby girl’s heart.” My mother gave him a serious stare.

“I swear on everything I love including her that I won’t break her heart,” Genesis promised. “When you see her, you see me and when you see me, you see her. She’s my everything.”

My mother then nodded and the smile on her face refused to disappear.

Genesis then turned to me and as soon as he did I wasn’t able to stop myself from leaning in toward him and kissing his seasoned flavored lips.

“Uhh, cut that lovey dovey shit out, man. We’re eating.”

“Jaiden! I swear that mouth of yours,” I heard my mother complain.

But I was too focused on Genesis to snap back at Jaiden. After our brief yet passionate kiss, I pulled away from Genesis.

“I love you,” I said, meaning every part of those three words.

“I love you,” he replied with a twinkle in his eyes. “And no matter what, I got you, sweetheart. Always.”

“Always,” I repeated after him.

We had each other and it was something I would never forget.

He had me and I had him. Always.

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epilogue i

One Year Later

"GENE! WE NEED TO GO…" She laughed when he flicked his tongue against her neck. "Our guests are waiting! Genesis… mmmh… Now you're just being naughty."

"Hell, yeah I'm being naughty," he whispered before he licked up and down her neck. "I'm being naughty… with my sexy ass wife."

"Your wife." She smiled after repeating his last two words. "I love how that sounds."

"You… do?" Genesis's licks quickly turned into kisses. "How much you love it, baby? Tell me."

"I… I love… Genesis…" she whimpered at the sharp bite of her skin. "We can't… we gotta go."

"We ain't going nowhere… not until I get you out of that dress."

"Oh, I see what's going on." She chuckled. "You're trying to put to action those words you said to me in your FaceTime call last night."

Genesis immediately groaned at her mention of his last night activities.

"I love you so much, Dana," Jordana said with a deep voice, trying to match her husband's baritone. *"I don't want none of these big booty strippers Dane brought for me… I want you here with me, babyyyyy. I want your big, sexy booty. Only yourssssss."*

Genesis started shaking his head with slight embarrassment as Jordana mocked his drunken tone.

"Please come to me, Dana… or I'll come to youuuuu. Just let me see you. I need to see you… I need to feel you."

"Alright, woman. You've made your point."

Jordana giggled while looking up at him. He towered over her even while she stood in heels.

“For the record I was drunk.”

“But we both know you meant every word,” she told him with a knowing look.

“I sure did,” he said, unable to deny it.

How could he deny it when it was the truth? The bachelor party that Dane had thrown for him last night had been fun in the beginning but after throwing back all those shots and seeing his baby nowhere in sight, Genesis began to miss her badly. The only thing he could be bothered to do was whip out his phone and FaceTime her to tell her how much he loved her, missed, and wanted her.

“And I mean every word, I want you.” He shot her a hungry look. “I’ve wanted you ever since I saw you walk down the aisle. I almost asked the pastor to give us a minute so I could take you to the back room.”

“Genesis!” She lightly slapped his hard chest. “Not you tryna get some in church.”

He tittered. “You know I can’t help myself around you, Sweetheart.”

Jordana’s lips lifted into a coy smile.

“I’m so glad you’re my wife, Jordana. We’ve been waiting anxiously for this day and it’s finally here.”

“It’s finally here my love. You’re stuck with me for life!”

“I wouldn’t have it any other way,” he said, leaning in closer to her face. “You’re everything I need.”

His smooth lips branded to hers and it wasn’t long till he was showing her with his mouth alone just how much he cared about her. The longer their lips stayed joined, the more he could feel his arousal growing below his belt.

Knock! Knock!

“Excuse me?” A familiar female voice was heard on the other side of the door. “Did you two love birds forget you have a reception to turn up at? Let’s hold off on operation get Jordana pregnant before the end of the year, Genesis, and focus on your reception for now please!”

“CC, just give us five minutes,” Genesis told her.

“You have two,” she countered. “Don’t make me call Jasiel, Jaxson, or Jaiden to come break down this door. You know they’ll do it.”

Charlie’s footsteps were then heard walking away from the door.

Genesis sighed and looked down at Jordana to see the grin stuck on her luscious lips.

“They will,” she confirmed with a light shrug. “You just need to be patient, Gene… besides, I have so much planned for you tonight on our flight to Bali… you know how long our flight is going to be… and it’s just going to be me and you on the jet… for twenty hours… with no one to disturb us.”

Genesis’s heart fluttered with excitement. Him and Jordana would be spending a month in Bali, Indonesia for their honeymoon. It was a month that Genesis had been looking forward to since they’d first planned their honeymoon six months ago. A month away from Houston was exactly what Genesis wanted but what he needed was his wife by his side.

“So be a good boy and stay patient for me.” The bulge in his pants grew. “And I promise you it’ll be so worth the wait, Mr. Washington-Evans.”

He slowly nodded while sinking his teeth into his bottom lip as he looked down at his gorgeous wife. Hearing her call, him by his new last name was enough to make him feel like the luckiest man alive. One of the things that Genesis wanted to make sure of was them both taking each other’s last names. Genesis knew that Jordana was one hundred percent down with taking his last name but he wanted to take her last name too. He wanted her to be certain that she was now a part of him. Her and her family were a part of him. She was his wife and he would forever be connected to her.

Even just remembering that she was his wife made his skin tingle and goosebumps rise on his skin. She really was his wife and he was too overjoyed about it. He hadn’t been able to stop crying when he’d seen her walk down the aisle with her mother.

The lovebirds shared one last kiss then headed out the private room they’d been in to enter their reception where they partied the night away with all their loved ones. Everyone they loved had attended. All their family and close friends.

Life was great and Genesis couldn’t wait to experience the blessing that marriage was. He couldn’t wait for him and Jordana to be that annoying married couple that never stopped kissing, hugging, and touching up on one another.

He couldn’t wait to spend the rest of his life with Jordana Evans-Washington.

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epilogue ii

One Year Later

JORDANA HAD BEEN HAVING a peaceful sleep. A sleep that she hadn't expected to awaken from anytime soon. But when an uncomfortable, queasy sensation formed in her stomach, Jordana snapped awake, tossed the satin sheets off her body, and sprinted to the left-hand side of the room.

One thing that Jordana couldn't stand was vomiting. It was something she'd done for the first time when she'd drank hard liquor at her tender age of twenty-one. Since that time, Jordana had matured and could handle her liquor much better now. But now as she spewed out the contents of the dinner that Genesis had prepared for her into the toilet bowl, Jordana was beginning to feel like an inexperienced drinker. The only problem was… she hadn't had one drop of alcohol today.

Jordana remained bent over the toilet as she vomited. Her eyes now watery and her body temperature rising the more she puked. The feel of a large hand caressing on her back seconds later eased the tension that had formed inside her and when he helped her adjust her bonnet that had slipped off her head slightly, Jordana was reminded of just how attentive her man was.

"It's okay, Dana. It'll stop eventually, my love… just keep breathing," he whispered while rubbing on her back.

Just like he'd said, the vomiting stopped moments later and Genesis helped Jordana get up from the marble floor before taking her over to the sink.

Jordana allowed him to wash her face from any vomit and sweat. Once her face was clean and dry, Genesis grabbed her toothbrush, placed toothpaste on her brush before handing it over to her.

“There you go, baby.”

She was feeling too weak to speak right now but she sent an appreciative look as she took her brush from him.

While she brushed, Genesis folded his arms across his bare chest and leaned against the sink as he watched her intently.

Jordana’s gaze dropped to her husband’s muscular chest. Even at his age of thirty-five he was still looking like one fine ass man. *Her* fine ass man.

Her gaze lifted back onto his soulful eyes and she immediately recognized the knowing look he housed.

After brushing her teeth and rinsing, Jordana dried her hands and came to stand in front of her husband. He placed his hands to the sides of her waist and pulled her in closer to him while she wrapped her arms around his torso. They remained silent but their eyes did all the talking.

We’re pregnant, her eyes said.

We are, his said before he dipped his head and captured her lips. Their kiss was everything Jordana needed it to be. *Loving. Gentle. Sweet.* And moments after their kiss, Jordana pulled away from him and looked up at him.

“I still need to go see my OB/GYN.”

“Of course,” he agreed with gentle nods. “We’ll book her next available appointment and go see her.”

Jordana loved whenever he used the word *we* . It was a word he used all the time and she adored how much he made sure they stayed connected. Even though she would be the one carrying their child, going through the unpleasant symptoms of pregnancy, and pushing their baby out, he still would refer to the experience as *their* experience, not just hers. And she absolutely loved him for that.

“But it’s looking likely that I am,” Jordana voiced. “My period has been late for a few days now.”

“What?” Genesis’s dark brown eyes widened. “And you didn’t tell me, baby?”

“I thought it was a false alarm… but now I don’t think so anymore.” She paused, thinking back to the last few weeks. How hungry she’d been. How dehydrated she’d been. How extra horny she’d been. “We’re pregnant.”

Genesis couldn’t stop the smile that suddenly grew on his lips and he quickly nodded. “We’re pregnant.”

Now Jordana couldn’t stop smiling the more she gazed up into his eyes. “You’re going to be the best father ever, Genesis. You’re already such an amazing father figure to Kaiser.”

“And you’re going to make the best mother,” Genesis told her before he gently pecked her lips. “You were raised by a wonderful mother who gave you all the tools you need to be a wonderful mother. You’re a wonderful wife and I can’t wait to see you carry our child.”

Jordana’s eyes misted with tears. She couldn’t believe that her hormones really had her acting like a fool already but she wasn’t sure if it was the pregnancy hormones or just her general weakness for her husband and his ability to always make her heart feel full.

“I can’t wait to see you be a mother. God knew you were going to be my wife but he also knew you were going to carry our child. You were destined to be a mother, Dana. I know without a doubt that God has your back. He has our back during this pregnancy. He’s had our back since we first met. *He who finds a wife finds what is good* and I found the greatest thing ever when I found you. You are blessing me with the opportunity to be a father to our beautiful child and I thank you for that. I can’t wait to be a parent with you. I can’t wait to experience this new part of life with you. You’re the only woman I would ever want to do this with. I love you so much.”

Jordana’s tears had fallen from her eyes and were now flowing down her cheeks.

“I-I love you so much, Genesis,” she told him while she silently cried. “More than you will ever know.”

Genesis smiled before leaning closer to her once again. He planted kisses on her wet cheeks, whispering constantly how much he loved her before finally joining his lips to hers.

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epilogue iii

One Year Later

WAKING up to an empty spot next to her spot wasn't a surprise for Jordana. She was used to his usual absence in the mornings. He always said that he wanted to stay ready to lead their family before they opened their eyes and Jordana respected that greatly. She respected him greatly too and couldn't believe how great life had been going for them these past few years.

After all the pain and trauma, she'd experienced in her past relationship, Genesis had helped her with her healing and loved her in ways that even she was becoming more and more surprised with each day.

Jordana used to be sick of her birthdays ever since her father had left her on her eighth birthday. But the first birthday she'd celebrated with Genesis prior to them even getting married, he'd made it such a great experience for her. He'd created a slideshow of some of their favorite moments that he'd captured on his phone and gotten all her friends on camera to say a few things that they loved about her.

Ever since Jordana had become Aubrey's manager, her relationship with Aubrey and the other hairstylists at the salon had only gotten better. Aubrey, Aja, Taylor, Leilani, and Summer were all her closest friends and they'd been bridesmaids at her and Genesis's wedding. Charlie had been her maid of honor and helped planned the wedding with Jordana and Genesis's wedding planner.

Jordana and the girls at the salon had also started going on yearly girl vacations together and always had the best time with one another. And how could Jordana forget about her twenty-ninth birthday that Genesis had planned. Since he was a successful business owner, he had major

connections in the city and he'd been able to keep The Galleria shopping mall open till midnight for her and her girlfriends to shop 'til they dropped. All on his dime of course because how could Genesis ever allow his wife and her friends to spend their money when he had plenty to hand out?

He'd allowed her to look forward to her birthdays from here on out and what used to be a day that she dreaded, she now loved dearly.

Speaking of her incredible cousin/best friend, Charlie… Charlie was living her best life as the future Mrs. Dane Hamilton. Dane had proposed to her last month and they would be tying the knot on a private island in the Bahamas in three months. Their relationship had prospered into something truly special and Jordana was grateful that her cousin had found her soulmate.

Dane had gone out of his way a few years ago to find Charlie a doctor for her severe period pain. It turned out that Charlie had a fibroid against the lining of her uterus and she'd had a myomectomy to remove the fibroid. Now that the fibroid was gone, her periods were no longer painful and her blood flow no longer as heavy. Dane had researched long and hard to find Charlie the best doctor in the country for her to no longer be in pain and Jordana respected him one hundred times more for having her cousin's back. He didn't care about the cost of the doctor or the time it took to find the doctor, he just wanted the best for his love and he'd achieved that by finding the best doctor who could remove her fibroid.

During the process of Charlie having her fibroid removed, Dane had also secured her a six-figure deal with Spotify to have her own podcast, speaking on her life experiences and of course, that included her experience with fibroids. He'd helped her not only share her experience with other women worldwide but he'd helped her secure the bag too. He wanted to see her win and that right there was something Jordana believed every man should want for their woman.

"Giselle, baby girl… this is my food you know… Daddy's gotta eat, mama… oh okay, I see you just want all my food to yourself even though you've already eaten your breakfast or should I say you tossed most of it around… a'ight, I see how it is. You've seen my plate and now you ready to eat, huh?"

After waking up, Jordana had brushed, showered, and changed into clean clothes. She walked through her 10,000 square foot dream home that her and Genesis had designed together during their honeymoon in Bali two

years ago. Their dream home was everything they'd both wanted in a home. It had five bedrooms, four and a half bathrooms, five walk in closets, a home theater, their own separate offices, a home gym, a man cave, a beauty room, an outdoor pool, a wine cellar, and a wet bar.

Jordana had walked into the dining room to be greeted to the cutest sight ever.

Her one-year-old stealing food off her father's plate.

She's just like her momma. She knows food tastes so much better when it's on her dad's plate.

"Oh, look who's finally awake, Giselle?"

"Mah-mah!" Giselle yelled and lifted her hands up in the air toward her mother.

"Good morning, my pretty baby!"

Jordana immediately rushed up to her mini me and picked her up from the dining table she'd been sitting on.

"How's my pretty baby doing this morning? Are you okay?"

Giselle nodded and giggled when Jordana peppered her face with kisses.

Giselle Washington-Evans was Jordana's twin and there was no denying it. She had her mother's angelic brown eyes, her button nose, and her thick curly hair. The only thing she shared with her father was his flawless walnut brown skin. Despite Giselle being her mother's twin, she was a daddy's girl through and through. And seconds after her mother had held her, Giselle was quickly looking over her shoulder at her father who sat at the head of the dining table.

"Da-Da!"

"Hey no fair," Jordana protested. "I just got you and I still want my kisses." Jordana continued to kiss her daughter's cute chubby cheeks.

"Da-Da!" she exclaimed, lifting her hands away from her mother and toward her father.

"Okay, fine." Jordana sauntered over to the dining table with a fake hurt look. "No more of my kisses for you, Giselle."

"I'll gladly take all your kisses," Genesis said with a smirk as he stretched out his arms to take Giselle from Jordana.

Jordana returned his smirk and once Giselle was in his arms, Jordana leaned closer to him and pressed a loving kiss to his lips.

"Good morning, Handsome," she greeted him after their kiss.

"Good morning, Sexy." He flashed her his pearly whites.

“Thank you for getting Gis out of bed and getting her situated.”

“You know I got you, baby. Always.”

“I know,” she said with a smile.

He’d been such a great support system during her pregnancy and even after Giselle had arrived, he remained consistent with being supportive. There wasn’t a day that he wasn’t there for her and Jordana was the exact same way toward him. Any time of day that he needed her she was there.

The lovebirds also started a non-profit organization together during their marriage. It was an organization that allowed them to team up and provide help to the homeless, vulnerable and victims of domestic violence. By using Genesis’s restaurant, GW Eleven, their organization would do monthly food banks and have days during the year when they would feed the homeless at GW. By using Jordana’s salon, AJ’s Artistry, their organization would provide haircare services to women in need of their hair being done but not being in the financial position to pay for it.

Working with her husband was one of the best things about life for Jordana and she could never get tired of giving to those less fortunate than her. God had blessed her with a successful business and she would always be willing to give back to those who needed support.

Just as Jordana leaned in to provide her husband with another kiss, a light smack hit her face and she gasped.

“Giselle Numa Washington-Evans, I know you didn’t just hit your momma.” Jordana gave her daughter a stern look but Giselle wasn’t fazed and even stuck her tongue out at her mother.

“My da-da!” Giselle yelled as she buried her head in her father’s neck.

“Oh, there you go. Being a daddy’s girl as per usual,” Jordana taunted her. “I’ll remember this the next time you want my loving.”

Genesis chuckled while patting Giselle’s back and kissing the top of her head.

“No more kisses for Gissy Pooh from momma anymore.”

Giselle’s head immediately popped up from her father’s neck.

“Mah-mah!” she yelled out and lifted her hands toward her mother again.

“Hey, what about me?” Genesis gave his one-year-old a fake hurt look. “Oh, so you just wanted to eat all my food this morning and then ditch me? Wow, Gis. You’re cold.”

Jordana glanced at the empty food plate on the table and giggled. Giselle had indeed eaten all his food and traces of golden syrup from the pancakes she'd eaten were all around her cute little mouth.

"Sorry, Da-Da," Giselle cooed to her father and stroked his beard.

"Yeah that's more like it. Remember who gave you all those yummy pancakes."

Jordana continued to giggle as she watched her daughter and husband interact. Seeing them was the best view of her life and she'd forever be thankful for the two of them. They were everything she needed and she could never stop loving them.

Never.

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a note from miss jen:

Thank you so much for reading my novel! It truly means the world to me. I hope you enjoyed reading Genesis and Jordana's love story.

I am so glad that I was able to write this story. Genesis and Jordana's love was something I thoroughly enjoyed writing about. They definitely drove me crazy pretending not to want more from each other but once they finally got it together, it was amazing to witness their love grow stronger and stronger! This was Genesis and Jordana's world and I'm grateful that you made it to the end of their story. They will always have a special place in my heart and I hope they have a special place in yours too.

Please head over to my official website, where you'll be able to find out about me and find more of my novels:
www.missjenesequa.com

I've also created Apple Music and Spotify playlists for the book which you can check out here: www.missjenesequa.com/playlists

Make sure you join my private readers group (Jen's Tribe) on Facebook to stay in touch with me and my upcoming releases:
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Once again, thank you very much for reading! Please let me know what you thought by leaving a review/rating on Amazon. I'd love to know what you thought about my novel.

See you next time!
Love From,
Jen xo

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